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A BAROQUE NUNNERY: THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ROLE OF A COLONIAL CONVENT SANTA CLARA DO DESTÊRRO, SALVADOR, BAHIA, 1677-1800

Susan A. Soeiro
June, 1974

A dissertation in the Department of History submitted to the faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Science in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at New York University.

Warren Dean approval

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

PREFACE.....iv

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....vii

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.....ix

INTRODUCTION.....1

Chapter

I. THE EUROPEAN MONASTIC TRADITION AND THE FOUNDING OF THE DESTÊRRO CONVENT.....5

European Monastic Tradition
The Founding of the Destêrro Convent
Benefactors and Beneficiaries

II. THE SOCIAL COMPOSITION OF THE CONVENT. 38

The Social Composition of the Destêrro
Royal Policy

III. THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CONVENT IN BAHIAN SOCIETY..62

Religious Function
Social Function
Economic Function

IV. WOMEN AND NUNS IN COLONIAL BAHIA. 87

Women and Nuns: the Ideal and the Actual
Convent Life

V. THE ECONOMIC ROLE OF THE CONVENT: LOANS. . . .115

Sources of Capital
Conventual Loans
The Debtor
The Creditor
Balance Sheet

VI. THE ECONOMIC ROLE OF THE CONVENT: REAL ESTATE.155

Extent of Conventual Holdings
Acquisition of Property
The Nature of the Destêrro's Holdings
Sale of Conventual Properties
Royal Efforts at Limiting Ecclesiastical Holdings

Page

Chapter

VII. REFORM OF THE DESTÊRRO CONVENT.....183

Visita of 1756
Reform Efforts: Laxity of Discipline
Reform Efforts: Conventual Administration
Reform Efforts: The Servile Population

VIII. CONCLUSIONS.....216

REFERENCE MATERIAL

APPENDIX I. TABLES AND FIGURES

Table

1. Fathers of Nuns of the Black Veil Serving on the Municipal Council.....223

2. Income of the Destêrro Convent from Loans and Real Estate.....224

Figure

I. Pledges of Donations to the Destêrro, 1644-1677..... 225

II. Daughters of Merchants and Planters Entering the Destêrro as Nuns of the Black Veil.....227

III. Interrelationships Among Bahia's Elite.....228

IV. Distribution of Celibate and Married Offspring Among the Bahian Elite.....230

V. Changes in Population of the Destêrro Convent.....232

APPENDIX II. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA ON FATHERS OF NUNS OF THE BLACK VEIL.....234

APPENDIX III. THE URBAN PROPERTY OF THE CONVENT OF SANTA CLARA DO DESTÊRRO: A PARTIAL LISTING.....255

APPENDIX IV. SAMPLE INVENTORIES OF NUNS.....262

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....267

PREFACE

My original intention in choosing the Desterre Convent in Salvador, Bahia, as the subject for my dissertation research was to do a four month, single-archival study based largely on microfilm. I planned to go down to Salvador, quickly settle in, and then approach the nuns of the Convent of Santa Clara for permission to investigate their archive -- using my camera to film its contents. I left New York in June, and hopdd to return home by December at the latest. These plans were not based upon naive fantasy. I had checked with John Russell-Wood, who had recently done research in the Desterro, about the prospects for such a study. His major caution was that I might not find enough material for a thesis. I had read enough about Brazil to realize that the best laid plans of researchers rarely proceed smoothly. I was therefore prepared psychologically to face the frustration of delays, inefficiency, and invonvenience. Since I hoped to put much of the documentation on microfilm, I brought with me two cameras and over 250 rolls of film. I thought I was prepared both mentally and materially to meet most difficulties.

What I learned above all else from my research experience was that, no matter how well thought out, the problems of research cannot be fully anticipated from a Greenwich Village armchair. I made three efforts to approach the nuns -- strictly in Brazilian style, always through a highly respected intermediary, and never alone. Each time my request to study

the archive was emphatically refused. Since Russell-Wood's research there, a new Mother Superior was in charge of the convent; the new policy was to refuse entrance to researchers, whether Brazilians or foreigners.

After two months of a frantic search for a new topic and much nail biting, the Destêrro's archive was graciously opened to me. For this significant jeito and the determination behind it, I owe a deep debt of gratitude to the Bahian historian, Kátia M. de Queirós Mattoso. She literally opened the doors of the convent to me. She also welcomed me into her home and contributed much to my stay and to my work through her friendship, her knowledge of Bahian history and her critical intelligence.

There are, of course, many persons whose help hastened the completion of this study. In Brazil, I am especially grateful to the Mother General of the Franciscan Order of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Irmã Dileta, for granting me permission to work in the Destêrro. The nuns in the convent, particularly Sisters do Rosário and Maria de Santa Eulalia were kind and helpful. Dona Marieta Alves generously made all her notes on the Destêrro available to me.

The Director of the Arquivo Publico do Estado, Renato Berbert de Castro, and his staff, especially Neusa Esteves, were invaluable for their courteous assistance with my research there. My assistants, Gonçalo de Oliveira Sousa and Iracema Alves de Santana, spent many hours poring over the hundreds of volumes of Notas de Escrituras. In Rio de Janeiro

At both the Biblioteca Nacional and the Arquivo Nacional my work was considerably facilitated by the gracious personnel of those institutions. Apart from work, many contributed to making my stay in Bahia so lively and interesting. Agnes Neeser's and Betty King's hospitality certainly deserves mention. The family of Dona Maria do Carmo provided me with many unforgettable experiences. Dedé and Solange were devoted friends. Most of all, it was that unlikely turma -- Anani, Mike, Angus, Emily and assorted transients that made my year in Salvador so uniquely bitter-sweet.

I also owe much to many at home in the States. More than anyone else my husband shared with me the trials of historical research and authorship. No words come to mind that adequately express the extent of his contribution. My parents and brothers helped with their support and consideration. Professor John Fagg's unfailing confidence in me has motivated me to demonstrate that his faith was not misplaced. Professor Nicolas Sánchez-Albornoz provided much encouragement and intellectual stimulation. I am expecially grateful to Professor Warren Dean for his painstaking review of this dissertation. His thorough knowledge of Brazilian history and his critical abilities have been of much help to me. Rae Flory, Catherine Lugar, John N. Kennedy, Linda Moody, Asunción Lavrin and Professors John Russell-Wood, Dauril Alden, Stuart B. Schwartz and Richard Graham provided me with information and helpful suggestions. Lastly, I am indebted to Mrs. Caporale and her

remarkable family who gave me the peace of mind necessary to write this thesis. Of course, no one shares with me the responsibility for any errors of fact or interpretation.

January 25, 1974

Ardsley, New York

ABBREVIATIONS

ABNRJ	Anais da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro
ACC	Anais do Congresso Comemorativo do Bicentenario da Transferência da Sede do Governo do Brasil, 1963
AHU	Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (Portugal)
AN	Arquivo Nacional
APB	Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia
APCHB	Anais do Primeiro Congresso da História da Bahia
AQCH	Anais do Quarto Congresso da História Nacional
ASCD	Arquivo do Convento de Santa Clara do Destêrro
BNRJ	Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro
DHAMB	Documentos Históricos do Arquivo Municipal da Bahia
HAHR	Hispanic American Historical Review
RIHB	Revista do Instituto Histórico de Bahia

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Plates (following p. 114)

I. A Christmas Eve Concert at the Destêrro

II. The Destêrro Convent

III. Detail from the Chapel of the Destêrro Convent

IV. The Destêrro Convent

INTRODUCTION

Why study a nunnery? If it is information about the Church we are seeking are there not more representative institutions to center research on? If it is women we seek to learn about was the nun not the most atypical of females in Iberian society? If we intend to broaden our knowledge of Luso-Brazilian society what can the study of a single institution contribute?

Since the Conquest of the New World the Church has participated actively in its development. Initial research on the institution generally dealt with its missionary role and its relations to the State.[1] Currently, the growing interest in social and economic history has inspired work on its financial activities.[2] One subject which has recently drawn the attention of scholars has been feminine monasticism.

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[1]See the excellent bibliography in Richard E. Greenleaf, The Roman Catholic Church in Colonial Latin America (New York, 1971), pp. 265-272.

[2]Michael P. Costeloe, Church Wealth in Mexico (Cambridge, 1967); Brian R. Hamnett,"The Appropriation of Mexican Church Wealth by the Spanish Bourbon Government -- The 'Consolidacion' de Vales Reales, ' 1805-1809, "Journal of Latin American Studies, 1:2 (November, 1969), 85-113: Arnold Bauer, "The Church and Spanish American Agrarian Stmucture: 1765-1865, "The Americas, 28:1 (July, 1971), 78-98; William B. Taylor, Landlord and Peasant in Colonial Oaxaca (Stanford, 1972), pp. 164-202; Asunción Lavrin, "The Execution of the Law of Consolidación in New Spain: Economic Aims and Results," Hispanic American Historical Review, (HAHR) 53:1 (February, 1973), 27-49.

Research on the patterns of recruitment of European nunneries has already produced significant findings,[3] and Asunción Lavrin's work has pioneered investigation into nunneries in New Spain.[4]

Changing directions in the study of ecclesiastical history have been paralleled by new emphases in other areas. For example, a partial consequence of investigations into social and economic topics has been a surge of interest in the history of hitherto neglected groups such as blacks, Indians and women. Since few women have had the opportunity to record their own history, the archives of the feminine orders are doubly valuable both for their disclosures on the operations of the Church and for their revelations concerning the women who wrote them.

This work attempts to relate the history of a nunnery to the social and economic structure of its locale, Salvador, Bahia -- the colonial capital of Portuguese America. Several

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[3]See especially, R. Burr Litchfield, "Demographic Characteristics of Florentine Patrician Families," Journal of Economic History, 29:2 (June, 1969), 191-205; and, Richard C. Trexler, "Le célibat à la fin du Moyen Age: Les religieuses de Florence," Annales, 6 (November-December, 1972), 1329-1350.

[4]Lavrin's work includes: "Religious Life of Mexican Women in the XVIII Century," (Unpublished Ph.D. diss., Dept. of History, Radcliffe College, 1962); "Ecclesiastical Reform of Nunneries in the Economy of New Spain in the Eighteenth Century," Americas, 22:2 (October 1965), 182-203; "The Role of the Nunneries in the Economy of New Spain in the Eighteenth Century," HAHR, 46:4 (November, 1966), 371-393; "Values and Meaning of Monastic Life for Nuns in Colonial Mexico," The Catholic Historical Review, 58:3 (October, 1972), 367-387; "The Feminine Orders in Colonial Mexico: Their Economic and Social Role in the Eighteenth Century," (Paper delivered at the American Historical Association Meeting, December, 1972).

aspects of the convent are discussed. A first chapter describes the struggle for the foundation of a convent in Salvador. A second deals with the social composition of the institution and studies the backgrounds and social origins of the religious. The next segment analyzes the functions -- social, economic and religious -- of the convent in Bahian society. A subsequent chapter questions the traditional views of women and nuns in colonial Salvador. Two sections are devoted to the important economic role of the Desterro. The first deals with its banking activities, and the second, with its landholdings. A last chapter discusses the eighteenth century reform of the Desterro's financial and spiritual condition.

In tracing the history of the institution from its origins in the late seventeenth century to its decline in the nineteenth, it became clear that the convent reflected the traits of a particular era -- the Baroque. The style of the Desterro in the eighteenth century was distinctively baroque in its morality, religion, art, and conventions. The Baroque is best remembered for its elaborate art. It was a style that attempted to reconcile opposites -- light with dark, movement with stability, the sacred and the profane. The society of Salvador and the cloister of the Desterro reveal such contradictions. Flagrant immorality coexisted with austere asceticism. Details were elevated to matters of significance. In religion, the execution of the ritual, the appearance of a procession, the vestments of the priest

or nun received more attention than the basic tenets of the faith. Displays of hospitality, of religiosity, of social position and family heritage were the preoccupations of the elite which dominated Salvador's society. My work describes the attitudes and behavior of that privileged sector as they relate to the Convent of Santa Clara do Destêrro. The Destêrro extended loans and owned property while it professed poverty. Some of its nuns clothed themselves in garments of silk, embellished by jewels of gold, silver and diamonds. They were served by retinues of slaves. Others did severe penance for the sins of the community. The Poor Clares of Salvador in the eighteenth century were typically baroque in their style and essence.

I EUROPEAN MONASTIC TRADITION & THE FOUNDING OF THE DESTÊRRO CONVENT

> Ponder well the consequences that could arise from the lack in this city of a remedy for the maiden whose dowry does not correspond to her quality, a shield for the chastity of the widow who enters to secure her honor, an incitement for the rich maiden who is inspired to spurn the world.
>
> DHAMB, Cartas, II, 57

European Monastic Tradition

Western Christian monasticism had its origins in the Rule of St. Benedict, written sometime between 535 and 545. Communities of itinerant ascetics had existed prior to this time, both in Europe and in the East. However, the Benedictine Order, in its formulation of a Rule defining ritual, discipline and physical structures, provided the spiritual and material framework for modern monachism. Its subsequent spread throughout the West was characterized by the rapid growth of independent and isolated centers of male and female religious, unrelated to each other except through the observance of a common rule.

By the tenth century, the communities of St. Benedict bore little resemblance to the ideals of their founder, who had fled the secular world to attain purity of religion and spirit. The monastic settlements did not remain distinct and separate from the lay world. Instead they were wholly integrated into the feudal structure of society. From the

moment of foundation, monasteries were strongly secularized:

> The initiative generally lay with a great baron who gave the site, provided an endowment of land and revenues, granted jurisdictional immunities, decided the affiliations of his monastery and regulated the future relations of his family to the community.[1]

The patron not only could appoint or even become the abbot, but he also could supervise the affairs of the community down to the last details of religious observance. His knights and retainers played an analogous, if lesser role, as benefactors and shared in the spiritual rewards of the monastery.

Founded and patronized by the aristocracy, monastic communities drew their recruits largely from the upper echelons of medieval society. Taking the tonsure in no way implied a vocation for the religious life. The common custom

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[1] R. W. Southern, The Making of the Middle Ages (New Haven, 1962), p. 156. Both Southern and Friedrich Heer, The Medieval World: Europe, 1100-1350 (New York, 1963), pp. 61-68, devote some space to a discussion of monasticism as an aspect of medieval society. For a concise account of the development of monachism, see also David Knowles, From Pachomius to Ignatius: A Study in the Constitutional History of the Religious Orders (Oxford, 1966). The operations of a rural monastic institution are discussed in R. H. Snape, English Monastic Finances in the Later Middle Ages (Cambridge, 1926). On the history of nunneries, see Lina Eckenstein, Women Under Monasticism (Cambridge, 1896); Catherine Boyd, A Cistercian Nunnery in Medieval Italy: The Study of Rifreddo in Saluzzo, 1220-1300 (Cambridge, 1943); Eileen Power, English Medieval Nunneries (Cambridge, 1922); Richard C. Trexler, "Le célibat à la fin du Moyen Age: Les religieuses de Florence," Annales, 6 (November-December, 1972), 1329-1350.

of the aristocracy was to place its unwanted progeny in a religious institute. One monk complained, "When they have got their houses full of sons and daughters, if any of them is lame or infirm, hard of hearing or short of sight, they offer them to a monastery."[2] Admissions of such children made the communal rule difficult to maintain. Moreover, increasing abuses combined in the course of time with growing interference from both patrons and secular church officials.

The Cluniac movement arose in the tenth century as a response to the pressing necessity of organizational and disciplinary reform. Its outstanding feature was direct obedience to the Pope, which eliminated both the influence of the lord and the bishop over the community. The individual settlements were connected by their common ties to the main house and to the leader of Cluny.

Through the influence of Cluny western European monachism was infused with new life and vigor for expansion. The eleventh and twelfth centuries witnessed a period of monastic revival. There was a proliferation of houses which reshaped Benedictine monasticism in observance, external organization, and recruitment. The monastic ideal gradually broadened to attract a wider social spectrum. By the twelfth century, there were substantial numbers of women of modest backgrounds, unable to gain admission to the more exclusive Benedictine Orders, who sought a religious institution to accommodate them. The double order, of which

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[2]Southern, p. 162, quoting Udalricus, Consuetudines Cluniacenses, P.L., vol. 149, 635-636.

the first was founded by Robert Arbrissel in Brittany (1117), arose in response. It was a community of nuns and lay sisters, supervised by an attached group of priests or canons who administered the sacraments to the settlement.

While on the one hand the great upsurge in popularity of monachism stimulated bequests of lands and churches,[3] increasing communal populations on the other hand contributed to lapses in discipline and declining standards. In reaction, a number of critics appeared in the thirteenth century to reproclaim the original ideals of Christianity and to restore the true faith. Among them, St. Francis of Assissi was the best known. Francis emerged not so much as a critic of reality as the spokesman of an ideal. In an effort to communicate his personal vision of Christ, he spoke out for humanitarianism, love, brotherhood, humility and poverty. Far from intending the establishment of an order, he, in fact, resisted institutionalizing his teachings. The very notion of constructing a site or immutable house of worship was the antithesis of his conviction that spiritual peach could be achieved only through the denial of property, comfort, and luxury. Ironically, Francis lived the last years of his life in the painful awareness that his ideals suffered distortion by his following. By the early thirteenth century, two distinct kinds of Franciscans had emerged: the original itinerant mendicants, and the property-owning monastery-dwellers. Besides this doctrinal split in his own lifetime, the popularity of Francis'

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[3]Knowles, Pachomius, p. 41.

preachings led him to create subdivisions of the Order to attract both the laity and aspiring female religious. Secular adherents were henceforth able to join the Third Orders to carry out charitable deeds. St. Clare of Assisi, who took the perpetual vows of poverty and chastity in 1212, was honored in name by the Poor Clares, who similarly served as the community for women drawn to a religious calling.

The rise of nunneries and the seclusion of women to separate orders was thus a relatively late development in the history of western monachism. Under the communal rule of St. Benedict, distinctions between the sexes had not been set forth. In his conception, the sharing of a common spiritual destiny likewise determined an equal place on earth for both male and female. Monks and nuns were itinerants, who were freely able to interact with secular society. Reform movements following the tenth century aimed primarily at disassociating monastic establishments from the secular world. Although the efforts were part of a general attempt to eliminate corruption, the notion of an enforced separation from society was first urged upon female religious. Idung, a Bavarian monk, advocated in a tract in 1190 the need above all for greater restrictions upon women. He argued that because women were the weaker of the two sexes, they should be curtailed in their movements. He contended that, at the very least, a nun ought to be distinguishable by her dress.[4]

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[4]Eckenstein, pp. 198-199, quoting Brother Idung, De Quator Weestionibus.

The creation of the double order, a community of nuns whose spiritual requirements were attended by a supervisory body of canons institutionalized the restraints upon female religious and subordinated them to the male. Whether or not it was -- as one scholar alleged -- "without a doubt, the austerity of the times [which] required that the nuns [be] habitually protected by men,"[5] is certainly dubious. The community founded by Arbrissel was an important exception. The settlement was dominated by an abbess who supervised both the nuns and canons. This anomaly arose probably not by design, but from the circumstance that many of the nuns were nobly born, whereas the priests were of more humble origins.[6]

Prior to the twelfth century, instances of exclusively female convents were rare. It appears that such centers were not founded with any frequency until after the emergence of the double orders, and it is thought that the nunnery evolved from this communal settlement. David Herlihy has suggested that the greater incidence of feminine settlements coincides in time with a general change during the twelfth century in the conception of the role of the female and her enhanced prominence as a property owner and estate manager.[7] Indeed, the notion that a rise in the social status of women may have led them to sponsor the creation of institutions independent of male authority is a provocative one and deserves further examination.

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[5]José Mattoso. Le monachisme ibérique et Cluny: Les monastères du diocèse de Porto de l'an mille a 1200 (Louvain, 1968), p. 131; Eckenstein, p. 198.

[6]Knowles, Pro-Pachomius, p. 34.

[7]Herlihy, "Land, Family and Women in Continental Europe, 701-1200," Traditio, 18 (1962), 89-120

The Iberian peninsula felt the impact of all the major currents of western monachism. The early wandering mendicant communities, Cluny, the double orders and the Franciscans all succeeded in crossing the Pyrenees. Distinct feminine religious houses seem to appear with frequency in the twelfth century, largely as an outgrowth of the double orders. According to available sources, the first nunnery was founded in Galicia in 1129.[8]

The succeeding centuries spanning the medieval to the early modern periods saw a proliferation of both the masculine and feminine orders. At the same time the institutions had transferred their settlements from their rural retreats to urban centers. In 1620 it was noted that there were twenty-four monasteries in Lisbon, housing 1,365 monks. Eighteen convents accommodated 1,832 nuns. Not included in this count were the four retirement houses for orphans, one for errant women and a seminary.[9] Unlike many of the medieval

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[8]In Portugal prior to the eleventh century the existence of only one exclusively feminine abbey has been documented. See Mattoso, pp. 131-132. Scholarly treatments of Iberian monasticism are rare. Some information may be gleaned from the works of Fortunato de Almeida, História da ingreja em Portugal, ed. Damião Peres (Porto, 1967).; Augustin Fliche e Victor Martin, Histoire de l'Eglise depuis les origines jusqu'à nos jours (24 vols., Paris, 1934-52) see especially, XVIII, 145-160; XIX, 62-119; Fernando Castelo-Branco, Lisboa seiscentista, 2nd ed. (Lisbon, 1957).

[9]Castelo-Branco, Lisboa, pp. 101-103. These figures should be regarded as approximate, as the estimates of contemporaries show some variation.

communities, organized as family enterprises under the patronage of a single lord, most of the new orders like the Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustines (Friars Minor) sustained themselves by the begging of alms. Overpopulation of convents not only made discipline irregular, but also self-support increasingly difficult. Unsympathetic to the burgeoning institutes, one government official remarked that clerics were in such excess that they survived only by eating one another.[10]

The attitude of the Spanish and Portuguese toward the Church was a curious mixture of religiosity and cynicism. The participation of the Church in all critical human activities from baptism to burial doubtless engendered a society -- if not deeply religious -- at least thoroughly aware of the Church's presence. However, in the minds of contemporaries, sincere religious conviction did not fail to coexist with a recognition of the Church's social role. For many males the Church offered an alternative to a career in the magistracy or the military. Just as temporal concerns forced men to don clerical garb, social pressures inspired women to take the veil. In keeping with European practice, the Iberian convent offered an honorable and inexpensive way of disposing of an unmarriageable daughter.[11]

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[10]Fortunato de Almeida, História de Portugal (6 vols., Coimbra, 1922-1929), V, 68.

[11]Thales de Azevedo, Povoamento da cidade de Salvador (São Paulo, 1955), pp. 219-220, quoting Costigan, Cartas de Portugal. See also, Castelo-Branco, Lisboa, pp. 101-107.

The absence of exceptional religious ardor among the warriors of the faith resulted in frequent failures to uphold the vows of the orders. Clerical scandals and intrigues became the common subject of royal correspondence. Moreover, in the seventeenth century an entire body of literature of amorous poems and billets-doux was produced by the devotees of nuns, known as freiráticos. Neither public disapproval nor legislation was sufficient to restrain the romantic designs of youthful courtiers upon their cloistered mistresses.[12] The presence of many women without religious inclination gave the nunneries of Portugal, and those of Europe in general, reputations of dubious merit. Hence, Hamlet's imperative to Ophelia of "Get thee to a nunnery," carried with it an insulting implication that few of Shakespeare's contemporaries could have failed to comprehend.

The Founding of the Desterro Convent, First Nunnery in Brazil

In the seventeenth century, Brazil, Portugal's principal Atlantic colony, in many respects mirrored the society of its mother country. The city of Salvador da Bahia de Todos os Santos, colonial capital and thriving seat of a tri-continental trade, resembled Lisbon in its main outlines. As commercial emporia and seats of government Lisbon and Bahia boasted elaborate palaces, baroque churches and residential mansions built with the treasures of an unsurpassed maritime empire.

Just as Bahia and Lisbon reflected the common heritage of Portuguese cities, the residents of Salvador also shared

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[12]Castelo-Branco, Lisboa, pp. 101-107; Fortunato de Almeida, História de Portugal, V, p. 68.

the attitudes and values of their kinsmen in Lisbon. Among the aspirations of the colonial elite of Salvador was the erection of a convent. Apart from its religious or social desirability, practical concerns convinced the leading Bahian citizens of their need for a local nunnery. The daughters of colonial magnates had hitherto been compelled to brave an Atlantic crossing enroute to convents in Portugal and the Azores. The trans-atlantic passage to Portuguese houses was both dangerous and expensive. The hazard of capsizing in mid-ocean, and the ever-present threat of pirate raids deterred many from their religious destinations. The trip to the metropolis required the cash to cover the expenses of the voyage, food, clothing and the conventual endowment of the maiden.

The costs of installing a daughter in the proper style were indeed heavy. In the case of D. Maria Rosa, who professed in an Azorean convent, the dowry she pledged counted for far less than half of her outlay. Gratuities to the conventual officers, other nuns, novices and servants; chickens, cows, lambs for the institution; personal effects including cloth, a cot, fine paper, a mirror, and prayer books for her spiritual life and miscellaneous items such as a stock of wax and rice came to well over one conto of <u>reis</u>. This 1,115,650 <u>reis</u> did not include the price of the voyage. According to the city fathers, young women and shipments of currency partially comprised the cargo of virtually every fleet leaving Salvador. Anxious, therefore, to be rid of such burdens, the Bahian elite

assiduously petitioned the king for the creation of a nunnery on their own soil.[13]

Economic considerations combined with religiosity, traditional values, and the fear of the oceanic crossing to enhance the appeal of a convent. Moreover, since 1644, when the municpal council submitted its first petition to the king,[14] adverse economic circumstances in Bahia probably heightened the need for the institution. Brazil's early seventeenth-century prosperity was based largely upon its monopoly position as a leading world producer of sugar. Bahia's coastal strip, known as the Recôncavo, was dotted with sugar plantations. As long as sugar commanded high prices on the European market, sales generated an adequate, albeit limited, supply of capital within the colony.

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[13]Arquivo do Convento de Santa Clara do Destêrro (ASCD), Livro da fundação, fols. 2-2v; 6-6v. Frei Antônio de Santa Maria Jaboatão, Novo orbe serâfico brasílico: crônica dos frades memores da província do Brasil (1761; rpt. 2 pts., 5 vols., Rio de Janeiro, 1858), Pt. 2, III, 627-628, 634-635; Anais do Primeiro Congresso da História da Bahia (APCHB) (5 vols., Salvador, 1950-1951), nos. 1857-1858, 1950; Documentos Históricos do Arquivo Municipal (DHAMB): Cartas do Senado (9 vols., Salvador, 1951 [?] - 1953 [?]), IV, 54-55; Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia (APB), Ordens régias, III, doc. 108. The itemization of the expenses incurred at profession in 1720 was taken from Arquivo dos Acores, XII (Ponta Delgada, 1892). I am very grateful to Professor Dauril Alden for furnishing me with this document.

[14]I have not been able to substantiate Affonso Ruy's claim in História política e administrativa da cidade do Salvador (Salvador, 1949), p. 218, that the Senado's first petition was written in 1603. Jaboatão, who based his history on sources obtained from the archives of the episcopate, the Senado, and the Destêrro Convent alleges that the appeals originated in 1644. See Jaboatão, Novo orbe, Pt. 2, III, 626. Moreover, the first donations for a convent date from 1644. ASCD, Cxa.1, Lista dos doadores, Pasta I (II).

In the 1670's competition in sugar production from the Antilles challenged Brazil's preeminence and resulted in a severe decline of sugar prices in Lisbon. From the level of 3800 reis per arroba in 1650, prices fell to 2400 in 1668 and descended still further, until in 1675, when the best grade of Bahian white sugar earned only 1000 reis in the metropolis. Prices hovered at this low level for more than a decade.[15]

The consequences of decreased sugar earnings were drastic for the Bahian economy. The reduction of capital inflow meant that planters turned increasingly to credit to finance the operations of the mill and the purchase of slaves and equipment. The chronic scarcity of specie compounded the problem. Ultimately, the lack of currency and the reliance upon credit made the style of living in a more prosperous era impossible to maintain. As cash supplies dwindled, the undertaking of placing a daughter in a transatlantic nunnery became a financially prohibitive practice.

There can be little doubt that for the colonists the nunnery represented something of a remedy for their difficulties. Petitions for the foundation of a Bahian convent arose at a time of extreme shortage of currency in the colony in the 1640's and persisted throughout the period of economic decline.[16] The erection of a local religious house first avoided the costly passage to Portugal. Second, and perhaps more important,

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[15] Frédéric Mauro, Le Portugal et L'Atlantique au XVIIe Siècle, 1570-1670 (Paris, 1960), pp. 240-247; João Antonil Andreoni (Andre João Antonil) Cultura e opulência do Brasil, ed. A. P. Canabrava (São Paulo, 1967), p. 38.

[16] APCHB, II, nos. 1857-1858, 1950, 1999, 2024, 2026.

retiring a daughter to a local nunnery made it possible for her father both to retain his capital within the colony in lieu of shipping it abroad, and, as will be explained in a subsequent chapter, to cement his ties with an institution that could serve as a local source of credit.

In spite of the pleaseof Bahia's municipal council, for more than twenty years (1644-1665) the King refused to authorize a convent. It is likely that he was reluctant to reduce the number of marriageable women in the colony.[17] It may also have been his dissatisfaction with conventual discipline in Portugal. License for the foundation of the convent was finally granted by Affonso VI in the decrees of February 7 and July 6 of 1665. On May 13, 1669, the Pope granted authorization for the convent.[18]

Both the royal decree and the papal brief limited the nunnery to fifty nuns of the black veil to be recruited from the entire colony. There were also nuns of the white veil, or conversas, who did not profess or vote in the affairs of

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[17] Documentos Históricos da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro, (DHBNRJ), (120 vols., Rio de Janeiro, 1928ff.), IXC (1950) 82-83. For other expressions of concern with the population of the colony, see DHBNRJ, XVIIC, 189-194; 272-273; Inácio Accioli de Cerqueira e Silva, Memórias históricas e políticas da província da Bahia, ed. Braz do Amaral (6 vols., Salvador, 1919-1940), II, 176; Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro, (BNRJ), Manuscritos, II,33-29, 113.

[18] ASCD, Livro da fundação, fols. 2-2v; 6-6v. The reasons for this change in royal policy are not clear. Pressure from influential colonists, the religious faith of the King, and the conviction that Brazil's population would not be seriously affected may have been responsible.

the community. The number of communal servants was restricted to fifteen, whereas personal attendants were expressly forbidden.[19]

Provisions for the administration and financing of the nunnery laid the responsibility in the hands of the Senado da Câmara, (municipal council), the convent's chief advocate. An annual income of 8,000 cruzados (approximately 3,200,000 reis), to be derived from the ownership of houses, plantations, and cattle ranches, and from placing the capital of the nuns' dowries on loan was determined necessary for the support of the religious.[20] The endowment required for entry was specified at 600,000 reis for a nun of the prestigious black veil, and at only half that amount for those of the lesser white veil. Although the abbess, elected by the nuns for a triennial term, was titular head of the community, initially the municipal councillors were entrusted with the task of managing the dowries and properties of the sisters. The council elected a board of overseers, consisting of three aldermen and a churchman as administrators.[21] In addition to these duties,

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[19] Ibid.

[20] During the late seventeenth century the cruzado fluctuated widely in value. Between 1656 and 1667 it ranged between 875 reis and 500 reis. From 1683-1706 a cruzado was the equivalent of 400 reis. In the eighteenth century a cruzado was valued at 480 reis. See A.J.R. Russell-Wood, Fidalgos and Philanthropists: The Santa Casa da Misericórdia da Bahia (Berkeley, 1969), pp.376-370; Roberto C. Simonsen, História econômica do Brasil, 1500-1820 (São Paulo, 1969), pp. 72-73. The value of the milreis in terms of the pound sterling can be found in H.E.S. Fisher, The Portugal Trade: A Study of Anglo-Portuguese Commerce, 1700-1770 (London, 1971), p. 147. In 1700, the milreis was worth 6s. 1d (annual average). Fifty years later, in 1750, the milreis was valued at 5s. 5 3/4d.

[21] ASCD, Livro da fundação, fols. 2-2v; 3-4v; Jaboatão, Novo orbe, Pt. 2, III, 627-628, 641-642; DHAMB, Atas da Câmara (6 vols., Salvador, 1949[?]-1955[?]), IV, 344-345; V, 209-210, 306-307.

the municipal body pledged to sustain the costs of building the convent and obligated itself to furnish any amount missing from the specified 8,000 cruzado endowment. Expenditures authorized by the administrative body and decisions made were subject to monthly review by the archbishop, since the ultimate jurisdiction over the convent lay in his hands."[22]

In 1677, the first nuns arrived from Portugal. Theirs was a mission inspired by divine zeal and supreme dedication. According to an ancient prophecy, four nuns were to leave the Convent of Santa Clara in Évora as the chosen instruments of God. After a long and difficult voyage they would arrive at a new land, on whose virgin soil they would create a sanctuary for women who chose to dedicate themselves to contemplation and service of the Divine.

In the dawn hours of a November morning in 1676, a sorrowful grouping of Poor Clares stood at the walls of their convent in Évora, fortified by the cross held on high, as they departed from their companions in fulfillment of their mission. The choice had not been an easy one. There had been the entreaties of parents and friends, the fears of the unknown, the dangers of the sea, and the many sacrifices to be made in a new and strange land. But the four courageous sisters were comforted by the inspiration that they had been selected by divine providence. As they began their journey overland by litter to Lisbon, the persistent rain immediately ceased. It was a certain sign that their mission would succeed.

Ten days after their arrival at the spectacular Bay of All Saints in April of 1677, the four nuns, flanked by an array

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[22]ASCD, Livro da fundação, fols. 2-24; 6-6v.

of notables, were borne in triumphant procession to the site of the Desterro Convent. The Te Deums chanted by a chorus of somberly clad monks and priests were punctuated by salvos of cannon fired by the ships and forts in the harbor. Crowds followed, eager to participate, yet doubtful of the occasion for the celebration. The harbor activity nearly ceased; fishermen abandoned their rafts; merchants, their transactions; black, white, Indian, male and female pursued the elaborate procession of sedan chairs and religious up the winding alleyways from the lower to the upper city. These festivities signalled the presence of the Franciscan Order of Poor Clares in the colonial capital of Salvador, Bahia, the first female religious in all of Brazil.[23]

In spite of the religious tenor of the occasion, the establishment of the convent ultimately signified a secular victory for the elite of Salvador. Rather than having been created in a single act of divine grace, the process of founding the nunnery required that a series of obstacles of a very temporal quality be surmounted. The first of these meant convincing the King of Bahia's need for the nunnery. This objective was complicated in the 1660's -- prior to ratification by the crown -- by a competitive claim on the chosen site submitted by the discalced Carmelites. By the following year the friars had selected another spot for their hermitage and the conflict was resolved. It is not unlikely that their quick capitulation was a result of their reflection on the power and

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[23]ASCD, Livro da fundação, fols. 7-9v; Jaboatão, Novo orbe, Pt. 2, III, 645-655.

prominence of their adversaries.[24] The bairro of Desterro had been chosen for the location of the Convent for its clean and salutary air, its fresh water, expanding population, proximity to the church and monastery of San Francisco, and the presence of a small chapel. Although the dispute with the Carmelites had been settled by 1664, and the locale designated for the nunnery, more than ten years passed before any religious could be found to come to Brazil.

A second major difficulty in the establishment of the Bahian nunnery lay in securing Portuguese nuns who were both willing to undertake the Atlantic crossing and who suited the papal specifications. His brief of 1669 required that they be drawn from a Franciscan convent of Poor Clares under the jurisdiction of the Ordinary.[25] When after three years, no volunteers were forthcoming, the Pope revised his original dictum and on October 20, 1672 permitted the sisters to come from a Franciscan house subject to the authority of the regulars.[26]

The papal revision did not, however, immediately facilitate the search for willing religious. The actual task of finding the nuns in Portugal had been assigned to the

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[24] APCHB, II, nos. 1999-2000; 2026-2027; 2051; Jaboatão, Novo orbe Pt. 2, III, 631-634; Valetin Calderón, Biografia de um monumento: O antigo Convento de Santa Teresa da Bahia (Salvador, 1970), appendix I, docs. 1-8, 149-156.

[25] According to canon law, the ordinary is one who has of his own right immediate jurisdiction in ecclesiastical cases, such as the archbishop over a province or the bishop over a diocese.

[26] ASCD, Livro da fundação, fols. 5-5v; Jaboatão, Novo Orbe, Pt. 2 Vol. II, 637-642.

council's procurador, or advocate, in Lisbon. As more time elapsed the municipal council became increasingly impatient. Convinced that their attorney did not have their interest at heart, the councilmen sought to independently arrange for the founding nuns. When in April of 1676 the representative wrote the council communicating the news that he had found a convent of Poor Clares from which he could recruit four nuns for the trip to Brazil, the councillors replied with a note encouraging his efforts. In spite of the sanction given to the attorney's activities, shortly thereafter the city fathers entered into secret negotiations for the establishment of the order of discalced Augustine nuns in Salvador. By August 21, 1676, a contract specifying the rules of the order, regulations of dress, dowries, sustenance of the nuns and obligations of the council had been agreed upon.[27] A letter to Prince Pedro, requested approval for the substitution of Franciscan nuns by Augustinians. In it the aldermen cited as reasons for the reversal the numerous obstacles in arranging for the Poor Clares, a desire to preserve the saintly memory of the sovereign's mother (regarded as patroness of the discalced Augustinian sisters), and some newly-found reservations about the discipline of the Franciscan sisters.[28]

No further mention of the transaction with the discalced Augustines has been found after late August of 1676, and by November 8 the Poor Clares of Évora had departed from their convent. The motives behind the municipal council's actions

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[27]This contract contained provisions similar to those founding the convent of Franciscan nuns. See DHAMB, Atas, V, 190-191.

[28]DHAMB, Cartas, II, 22-24; 29-36; DHAMB, Atas, V, 189-194.

most likely lay in its frustration with delays, and perhaps in a genuine conviction that its advocate could not be trusted. For what other reason would they have negotiated and contracted with the Augustine friars even after they had received word that final arrangements for the transportation of the Poor Clares were under way? The councilmen's sudden preference for the Augustinians on the grounds that it was a more cloistered order could not have been sincere, because this preoccupation was expressed neither before nor since.

The King's recalcitrance, Papal restrictions and complications with other orders were factors responsible for the delay of the nuns until 1677. However, even the much heralded landing of the founders in Bahia amounted to little more than a pyrrhic victory for the municipal council. It had been the spokesman, agitator and moving force for theerection of the convent. It had been awarded the title of patron in return for its acceptance of the fiscal responsibility for the construction and maintenance of the nunnery. The authority of the archbishop,[29] on the other hand, was not clearly delineated, although the Senado's decisions concerning the convent were subject to his review and the abbess was subordinate to him in religious and temporal matters. As a consequence of the ill-defined episcopal superiority, conflicts of jurisdiction between these elements arose at the first opportunity and continued through the course of a decade. The first occurred immediately on the arrival of the founders. At the time of the nuns' landing in Salvador on April 29, 1677, the Desterro Convent was not yet in a condition to accommodate them. The

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[29]Bahia was first designated an archbishopric in 1676.

cabido, or board of ecclesiastical governors -- in charge in the absence of the archbishop -- suggested that the nuns be lodged in the house of a prominent citizen until they could be moved to their permanent location. They further complicated the situation by proposing a new site for the nunnery. The council contested both these propositions, first on the grounds that they were uneconomical, and second, that the chosen residence, in the very heart of Salvador, was improper for even the temporary accommodations of the religious. When at last presented with the options, the nuns and their confessor decided to remain on board ship (for the space of ten days) until the Desterro Convent was ready.[30]

This first dispute was easily resolved and inconsequential. The cabido's dissatisfaction with the chosen location was in all likelihood a first attempt to flex its jurisdictional muscles and to challenge the authority of the municipal council. Far more substantial conflicts arose over the question of support of the convent. These issues reveal self-interest politics and tensions among colonial authorities. Essentially the clash revolved about three centers of power -- the local government, the royal bureaucracy and the secular church. The King acted as ultimate arbiter.

The municipal council in its enthusiasm for the project had obligated itself to finance the construction of the buildings and the sustenance of the religious until conventual revenues themselves could be used. Such a responsibility, although a heavy one, was not unrealistic in the manner in which it was devised in 1668. According to the original scheme, 50 percent

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[30] Jaboatão, Pt. 2, III, 645-647; DHAMB, Atas, V, 204-207.

of the funds needed were to be drawn from an existing levy on whale oil. However, by 1673 the tax had been allowed to lapse and was only reinstated after the arrival of the nuns in 1677. According to the computations of the council, the impost was calculated to supply approximately 4,000 *cruzados* (1,600,000 *reis*) annually for the construction of the convent. To supplement this sum the aldermen pledged to contribute another 4,000 *cruzados* from the coffers of the municipal treasury and yet another 600,000 *reis* for the annual support of the nuns. It was understood that these donations would be augmented by any contributions from forthcoming benefactors.[31]

A short time after the reimposition of the whale oil impost, the *procurador* of the Royal Treasury invalidated it on the grounds that it violated the King's prerogatives. Although the councillors argued that the levy represented a "voluntary donation" which would not impinge upon the King's revenues, and claimed that the *procurador's* objections stemmed from his dubious arrangement with the contractor of the whaling monopoly, the King deferred judgment on the question. The tax itself signified a 25 percent rise in the price of a product whose consumption in the colony was universal. Hence, it would bear down most heavily on the poorer segments of the population. In 1684, when the issue was finally settled by the King's refusal to reinstate the levy, it appears that he acted out of a reluctance to tax the common people for the sake of an institution which would benefit mainly the wealthy.[32]

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[31]DHAMB, *Atas*, V, 115-116, 230-232.

[32]DHAMB, *Atas*, V, 242-244, 260-262; DHAMB, *Cartas*, II, 42-44, 51-52, 55-56, 63-67, 58-61, 93-97, 102-103; DHBNRJ, LXXXVI, 223-224; IIXC, 255-261; APCHB, nos. 2952, 3140; Jaboatão, Pt. 2, III, 659-661.

There was some contradiction and not a little self-interest in the council's persistent defense of the tax on whale oil. Prior to the emergence of the issue, the council had many times entreated the King to lessen the tax burdens on the population. In 1679, at the suggestion that public funds be used to construct much needed public works, the aldermen alleged that the populace was already too hard-pressed by contributions for the support of the infantry, the indemnity to Holland and the queen's dowry. According to the councillors, "the detriment of paying a small contribution [for a bridge] would be far more serious than that of exposing the inhabitants to total ruin [from floods] . . . ."[33] Moreover, the burdens of financing other religious institutions already weighed heavily on the treasury. In 1680, the councillors refused to authorize the founding of a Capuchin hermitage on the grounds that the city was already strained by its support of six communities of mendicant friars, the construction of the cathedral, the Benedictine monastery and that of the discalced Carmelites.[34] The deepening economic crisis of the 1670's and 1680's followed by the natural disasters of epidemics, crop failures, and famine did not deter the municipal council from the task of founding a convent. The royal nullification of the whale oil levy left the municipal council without a reliable source of funds for the construction of the convent. Undaunted, the aldermen planned to continue their project on the basis of public contributions and municipal funds. The councilmen

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[33] DHAMB, Cartas, II, 62.

[34] DHAMB, Atas, V, 262-264.

reasoned that if construction proceeded at a rapid pace, and the convent attracted the daughters of Bahia's wealthiest citizens, it would soon be a self-supporting body.[35]

However, the difficulties in achieving the crown's confirmation were further compounded by conflicts with the archbishop. The council's default on its original pledge of 8,000 cruzados led to a bitter confrontation with the prelate, who refused to permit the admission of any novices. The struggle with the cleric was further complicated by his absence from Bahia which required that all of his directives be interpreted and enacted by the cabido functioning in his stead.[36] Therefore, the municipal council was forced to communicate both locally with the ecclesiastical board, and transatlantically, with the archbishop. As was frequently the case, distance and the involvement of several parties occasioned many misunderstandings.

Eighteen months had passed since the arrival of the nuns from Évora and not a single girl had been permitted by the episcopal authority to enter the novitiate.[37] Alms and public

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[35]DHAMB, Cartas, II, 43.

[36]Although the archbishopric of Bahia was created in 1676, the first appointed archbishop, Dom Gaspar Barata de Mendonça, never came to Brazil. It was not until 1683, when Dom Frei João Madre de Deus occupied the post, that Bahia had an archbishop in residence. In the interim, the cabido served in his stead. José Antonio Caldas, Notícia geral de tôda esta capitania da Bahia... (ed. facs., Salvador, 1951), pp. 40-41.

[37]Two women had entered the convent in January 1678, although their position in the novitiate had not been ratified. ASCD, Livro primeiro das entradas e profissões, nos. 1, 31; Jaboatão, Novo orbe, Pt. 2, Vol. III, 656-658.

contributions had slowed to a trickle as public enthusiasm and interest declined and construction ground to a halt. The founding nuns became disheartened with the perpetual delays. After all, as the municipal councillors sarcastically commented in a letter to the crown, "[they] are mortal and not eternal."[38]

Archbishop Dom Gaspar de Mendonça relented sufficiently to permit the official celebration of the foundation of the convent to take place on October 22, 1679 and to allow twelve women to enter the novitiate. Perhaps the sixteen cells already completed satisfied his conditions. In any event, his reconsideration was shortlived. When once again the prelate's power was tested by the novices' petitions for license to profess, he refused. The aspiring religious, unwilling to remain forever in the novitiate, then threatened to return to their homes if they were not permitted to profess. As a result, the abbess took the situation into her own hands and allowed the ceremony of induction to take place.[39] Thus the validity of the professions could indeed be called into question by superior clerical authorities.

By 1681, each of the principals in the dispute had assumed a position which isolated it from the others and permitted no compromise. The archbishop maintained that until the council furnished the full extent of the pledged amount, he could not sanction the admission of any religious. Moreover, he urged an increase in the required dowry, from 600,000 to 800,000 reis. The municipal council on the other hand, claimed that without the

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[38]DHAMB, Cartas, II, 57.

[39]DHBNRJ, IIXC (1950), 219-220; APCHB, II, no. 3007; Jaboatão, Novo orbe, Pt. 2, III, 659-661.

confirmation of the whale oil levy, it could not continue its support. The councilmen also rejected the suggestion of a higher dowry, since they viewed this as another episcopal effort to deter professions.[40] Lastly, the abbess, who was to some extent the victim of the contest for power between the prelate and the patrons, became alienated from each of them. Her main interest lay in increasing the number of religious in the Destêrro. Since she felt both that the council's contribution was insufficient, and that the prelate's ban was unreasonable, she appealed to the King to settle the dispute.[41]

Resolution of the deadlock was partially achieved with the resignation of Dom Gaspar and his substitution by a less recalcitrant successor, who ratified the questionable professions prior to his arrival in Bahia in 1683. However, the ultimate settlement of the conflict over financing was reached only by arbitration of the crown. In 1683 the abbess was still complaining to the King that the municipal council had failed to provide the funds necessary for the construction of the convent. After conducting an investigation into the finances of the city council and soliciting the opinions of various royal officials about the imposition of the opposed tax on whale oil, the crown concluded that for a period of six years the council would be required to provide only 600,000 _reis_ per year for the sustenance of the religious. The council was thus relieved of its responsibility of financing the actual construction in view of substantial donations by some entrants.

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[40] DHAMB, _Cartas_, II, 51-52.

[41] ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas I(I), 7.

When the wealthy widow, Antonia de Goes, professed in 1684, she pledged a contribution of 10,000 cruzados (4,000,000 reis) at an annual rate of 500,000 reis per year. In the same year, the five daughters of Manuel de Oliveira Porto entered the cloister, bringing with them a bequest of 20,000 cruzados (8,000,000 reis)consigned for work on the dormitories. These two gifts alone surpassed the sums the council members had collected from the public in the years since 1644.[42]

With the intercession of the crown and the presence of a more sympathetic archbishop, the founders left Brazil in 1686 after nine harrowing years, now secure in the knowledge that their mission had been a success. In 1684 the convent counted a total of twenty-nine religious, and then two years later, the daughters of Bahia's notables vied for places. On the day set for their sailing in July, 1686, the nuns were feted grandly by the populace of Salvador. On this occasion, not even the insolvency of the municipal treasury impeded their journey, as the financing was accomplished by a loan of funds previously consigned to the infantry. The officers of the convent had been newly elected and the nunnery began its independent existence.[43]

Benefactors and Beneficiaries

The Desterro Convent had been founded in response to the needs and desires of a privileged social sector. In pressing for the convent's creation, the municipal council acted as

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[42]DHAMB, Cartas, II, 43, 63-66; IV, 55.

[43]Sebastião da Rocha Pitta, Historia da america portuguesa, 3rd ed. (Salvador, 1950), p. 253; Jaboatão, Novo orbe, Pt. 2, III, 662-666; DHAMB, Cartas, III, 15-16, 26, 36-38; DHAMB, Atas, VI, 57-58, 58-71; APCHB, II, nos. 3073-3074, 3106, 3325-3330, 3348-3349.

the spokesman for the local elite. However, a nunnery in Salvador represented a more general social aspiration. A list of donors reveals that persons of varying backgrounds contributed to the founding of the institution.[44]

This alphabetically arranged listing provides the names of 190 contributors in the years 1644, 1668, 1670 and 1677. Included were the amount promised, whether donated in cash or kind, the length of time taken to fulfill the pledge, and occasionally the residence of the patron. Although contributions ranged from 400,000 reis to less than 1,000 reis, more than 50 percent of all donations fell under 10,000 reis. (Figure I) To put these sums into perspective it is useful to know that in 1680 the mestre de assucar or leading employee of a large-scale engenho earned 100-130,000 reis per year. His subordinates, the foreman and the overseer of the crushing had salaries of 60,000 and 40-50,000 reis.[45] A laborer without special skill such as a pall bearer for the Misericórdia was paid 16,000 reis.[46] Ittthus appears likely that a contribution in the region of 5-10,000 exceeded the capacity of even the most skilled laborers.

Moreover, other clues seem to indicate that a majority of donors were in fact landholders, among whom were both cane growers and tobacco farmers. A significant portion (17 percent) of all bequests were made in kind, which, with few exceptions,

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[44]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Lista dos doadores, Pasta I (II).

[45]João Antonio Andreoni (André João Antonil) Cultura e opulência do Brasil, annot. Andreé Mansuy, Travaux e Mémoires de l'Institut des Hautes Etudes de l'Amérique Latine, 21 (Paris, 1968), pp. 110-112, 116.

[46]A.J.R. Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, p. 380.

rarely exceeded a value of 10,000 reis. Of these, the vast majority were pledges of sugar. Although gifts of tobacco, cattle or gold were distinctly secondary to those in sugar, there is an indication that tobacco farmers figured prominently among the modest donors. Without exception those persons who promised tobacco rolls in lieu of specie resided in the southernmost district of the Recôncavo known as Maragogipe. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the region was most prominently involved in the production of tobacco and manioc flour. The tendency had always been to favor tobacco growing over manioc for its greater earning potential. Assuming then that the area was predominantly populated by tobacco farmers, we might likewise classify the additional donors from Maragogipe as producers of tobacco. In that case, as much as 7 percent of the total contributors were tobacco farmers. The level of their gifts remained under 3,000 reis, with the exception of the local vicar who provided 20,000.[47]

Compared with the tobacco growers, pledges in kind from the sugar producers ranged considerably, from one hundred arrobas of sugar valued at 100,000 reis to one crate of dark sugar not even accorded a monetary value. Of the cash pledges, a substantial 18 percent constituted impressive donations of more than 100,000 reis. Among these wealthy patrons was the poet-satirist Gregório de Mattos, who, though he favored the convent with his contribution, later had some harsh words for

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[47]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Lista, Pasta I (II); Stuart Schwartz, "Free Labor in a Slave Economy: The Lavadores de Cana of Colonial Bahia," Colonial Roots of Modern Brazil, ed. Dauril Alden (Berkeley, 1973), p. 170, n. 61.

the "lascivious nuns" of the Desterro.[48] A native of Bahia, Gregório de Mattos earned his law degree at Coimbra and thereafter returned home to serve on the ecclesiastical court of appeals. Although prominent socially, his disregard for convention and his predilection for satirizing powerful officials earned him the nickname of Boca do inferno, as well as his eventual deportation to Angola. Another significant benefactor of a more respectable cast was Antônio da Silva Pimentel, descendant of a clan of wealthy sugar planters. His generosity was not confined to patronizing the work of the convent. In the 1650's he was largely responsible for the erection of the church of the Misericórdia.[49]

Individuals did not donate because they intended to place a daughter in the convent; relatively few of them even cloistered their progeny there. Judging from the range of contributions, it is likely that not many in fact could afford the required conventual dowry of 600,000 reis. However, even among those who pledged over 100,000 reis, only two had any of their female children take the veil. João de Aguiar Villas Boas, the largest contributor of sugar, pledged one hundred arrobas, although he defaulted on sixteen of them in 1668. A recent arrival in Bahia, he had derived substantial wealth from the sugar engenho of Santo Amaro de Sergipe do Conde. Son of a prominent official in Angola, Villas Boas was elected to the municipal council and became manager of Misericórdia. Of his

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[48] Obras completas (6 vols., São Paulo, 1945), I, 237.

[49] Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, p. 118.

eight children, two of the four females entered the Destêrro.[50] Pedro Gomes, another immigrant to Brazil, rose to prominence through royal service in the military. Beginning his career as a captain in the infantry, he eventually served as military governor of Rio de Janeiro. Like João de Aguiar and Antônio da Silva Pimentel, he was also provedor (manager) of the Misericórdia. He had seven children, two of whom died in infancy. Of the four female children, two married and two took the veil.[51]

If the vast majority of donors were not motivated by the desire to place their children in the Destêrro, what then inspired the urge to give? Most probably the wealthy sponsored such projects out of religiosity, respect for tradition and a sense of social responsibility. On the other hand, donors of lesser magnitude may have been moved by a desire for social mobility. Stuart Schwartz has suggested that the lavradores de cana (cand growers) generally shared the values of the senhores de engenho (mill owners) from whom they rented or purchased their lands. Imitation and emulation of the behavior of a superior social group by these sugar growers was an expression of their social aspirations.[52]

Turning from the nature of the donors and their motivations, it is worthwhile to consider the course of the donations over time. The most noteworthy aspect of the list is that contributions drastically declined after 1668. In the collections

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[50]Jaboatão, "Catálogo genealógico", Revista do Instituto Genealógico da Bahia (4 vols., Salvador, 1945-1948), IV, 129-130; ASCD, Cxa. 1, Juros dos dotes, Pasta 2(II); Livro das entradas, nos. 3, 4[?].

[51]Jaboatão, Catálogo, IV, 121; ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 4.

[52]Schwartz, "Free Labor," pp. 187-188.

of 1670 and 1677 pledges reached only 10 percent of their combined 1644 and 1668 levels. (Figure I) While contributions in sugar fell to one-fifth of their former heights, tobacco donations were entirely absent. In all probability, declining pledges were a consequence of the deteriorating economic situation. Although the politics of establishing a convent may have discouraged benefactors, the papal ratification in 1669 distinctly improved the prospects of the nunnery. A slight rise in the levels of donations in 1677 was probably inspired by the arrival of the nuns from Portugal. However, even this renewed enthusiasm left donations at less than 25 percent of their 1644 measure.[53]

Supplementary to the list of donors reviewed above, additional convent sources reveal that owners of vast cattle estates proved willing givers to the project. In 1679 two of the greatest livestock potentates, Francisco Dias D'Avila and Francisco Guedes de Brito, promised a total of 800,000 _reis_ to be paid at an annual rate of 100,000 _reis_.[54]

To sum up, it may be said that the sponsors of the convent were drawn from a broad social spectrum. Substantial support came from sugar planters, both millowners and _lavradores_. A few cattle breeders made handsome donations. Tobacco growers also figure among the contributors, although their donations were invariably smaller than those of the sugar planters and cattlemen.

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[53]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Lista, Pasta I(II).

[54]ASCD, _Livro da fundação_, fols. 10-10v.

If the benefactors of the convent were many and varied, the beneficiaries were limited to a select few. With rare exceptions only Bahia's most notable citizens succeeded in gaining admission for their daughters. Children of municipal council members, whose labors achieved the founding, received preference in entrance. During the period 1677-1700 no less than 70 percent of the professants hailed from aldermen's families. (Table I) Apart from a local governing elite, royal officials and their descendants, scions of Bahia's first arrivals, prominent church, and military men had their daughters take the veil.[55]

The places of the nunnery were soon filled to overflowing. In 1688 the councilmen petitioned the crown for the conversion of twenty-five places of the white veil to those of the black. These and subsequent petitions all met with rejections.[56] Efforts to restrict the size of the Desterro's population did not, however, circumscribe its significant social role. For the women of Bahia's elite, the convent did, in fact, provide the much desired sanctuary. As alms and donations augmented the conventual coffers, the nunnery became a leading urban landlord, an important source of credit for the sugar sector and a secular power in its own right. The aim of this work is to provide a study of the economic operations and societal functions of this ecclesiastical institution. Although limited

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[55]DHAMB, Cartas, II, 125-126, 129-132; III, 9; IV, 54-55; DHBNRJ, IXC, 21, 39-40; APCHB, II, nos. 3244, 3300. See ch. 2 for a detailed treatment of the social composition of the nunnery.

[56]BNRJ, Manuscritos, II-33, 22, 114, no. 1; II-33, 29, 113; II-33, 29, 114, no. 1; DHBNRJ, XVIIC (1950), 189-194; DHAMB, Cartas, IV, 54-55: III, 57-58; Accioli, Memórias V, 223.

in scope, this research ultimately addresses itself to the larger issue of the position of the Church in Ibero-American society. Succeeding sections of this work will therefore explore the nunnery's composition and social uses, its internal administration, and its policies of land management and money-lending.

II THE SOCIAL COMPOSITION OF THE CONVENT

> "In Brazil [distinctions based on class] would be scandalous since the common man affects the airs of a great nobleman."
>
> DHBNRJ, XCVII, 190-192

Prominent among diversions in Brazil's colonial capital, Salvador, city of all saints, were the rites that hallowed a young girl's decision to take the veil. Her profession was executed with the pageantry and pomp of a matrimonial ceremony. In attendance were the archbishop, the town's leading citizenry and curious onlookers at the portals of the convent. Bells chimed in exuberant celebration and, on some occasions, ships sounded their canonry in the harbor. Amidst the festivities, the novice vowed to God, the Virgin, St. Francis and St. Clare that she would forever honor her sacred promises to live in poverty, chastity and obedience.[1]

The Social Composition of the Desterro

Until the mid-eighteenth century, the nunnery of Nossa Senhora Santa Clara do Desterro was the only convent in Brazil. Founded in 1677, the Desterro was intended to provide the religious vocation for the daughters of Bahia's leading citizens. Despite its avowed exclusivity of purpose, the nunnery additionally accommodated a body of seculars, which included women drawn from a less privileged social sector. In this, the Desterro was no exception, since convents have traditionally served as sanctuaries for the orphaned, the widowed, the

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[1]Thomas Lindley, Narrative of a Voyage to Brazil (London, 1805), pp. 142-143.

unmarriageable and the disgraced female. This chapter is therefore directed as an investigation of this potentially diverse monastic population in the context of the Bahian social fabric. The inquiry into the social and ethnic composition of the Desterro reveals suggestive findings largely about the elite. Moreover, such study raises many questions about the modest families whose daughters sought conventual seclusion.

Eligibility for a position of nun of the black veil (véu preto) was determined largely by three factors -- race, financial position and social standing. Of critical importance was the ability of the aspirant to furnish proof of limpeza de sangue, demonstrating that she was both of Caucasian and of Christian ancestry. Iberian concerns for ethnic and religious purity dictated that New Christians and non-whites were automatically excluded from admission to the religious orders and lay brotherhoods.[2] As a consequence, women of known mixed racial antecedents could anticipate barriers to their entry in any of Bahia's nunneries. In 1754 an officer of the local garrison petitioned the King to permit his three motherless daughters to enter convents in Portugal. The

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[2]See A.J.R. Russell-Wood, Fidalgos and Philanthropists (Berkeley, 1968), pp. 143-144, 329; Russell-Wood, "Class, Creed and Colour: A Study in Prejudice," Race (October, 1967), 152; Charles Boxer, Race Relations in the Portuguese Empire (Oxford, 1963), pp. 116-120, is a good summary of legal discrimination. Religious brotherhoods systematically excluded persons of color in their statutes. See, for example, the Compromisso of the Misericórdia in Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, p. 124. Cf., "Compromisso da Irmandade da Gloriosa Santa Helena . . .., ch. VII, 1759, ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 42. The Spanish had similar strictures for their institutions, including their nunneries. See Asunción Lavrin, "Values and Meaning of Monastic Life for Nuns in Colonial Mexico," The Catholic Historical Review, 58:3 (October, 1972), 369-371.

gentility of their upbringing was not in question. They had apparently been refused admission to Salvador's nunneries because they were pardas, although "not even very dark complected."[3]

Purity of blood was, however, a criterion difficult to enforce, as fraudulent certifications of limpeza de sangue must have been commonplace. One contemporary writer, in fact, claimed that many parents had their offspring take the habit for the sole purpose of obtaining documentable proof of the racial and religious purity of the family.[4] Furthermore, the degree of contamination clearly must have been difficult to measure. For instance, was a descendant of a New Christian at some definable point deemed "cleansed?" Were those of mixed blood, although phenotypically white, subject to discrimination? The policy of the Destêrro was aimed ideally at a strictly enforced racial exclusivism. This meant that anyone suspect of racial or religious admixture could be subjected to a rigorous inquiry and be denied entry if any doubts lingered. Nevertheless, a rigid barrier proved untenable, and on occasion, the requirement of religious and ethnic purity was waived in favor of other considerations. As early as 1679 the two daughters of the substantial landowner Luis Paes Florião were admitted to the Destêrro in spite of the fact that their grandmother's first husband had been singled out as a Jew in

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[3]APB, Ordens régias, LIII, fols. 167-172.

[4]Aspectos da economia colonial, ed. Pinto de Aguiar (Salvador, 1957), p. 26. Francisco Pyrard de Laval, A viagem de Francisco Pyrard de Laval . . . , annot, Joaquim Heliodoro da Cunha Rivara (2 vols., 1679; rpt. Porto, 1858), II, 228, remarked on the large numbers of crypto-Jews in Bahia. On the Jews, see Arnold Wiznitzer, Os Judeus no Brasil colonial (São Paulo, 1966).

the denunciations of the Inquisition.[5]

Toward the end of the eighteenth century a growing population of mixed-bloods made the restriction of non-whites from local institutions increasingly difficult. By the 1790's, several pardas had been admitted -- as seculars -- to Bahia's convents. The inclusion of a handful of mulattas did not mean, however, that they gained access on an equal footing with whites or that suspicions based upon racial differences had dissipated. Suggestive of the persistent discrimination, a petition by a secular in the Destêrro urged the crown to allow the founding of a nunnery exclusively for women of color. The archbishop advised rejection of the proposal on the grounds that neither males nor females of mixed racial origins could be considered trustworthy.[6]

The fifty highly coveted places of the nuns of the black veil were filled by the elite of Salvador and the Recôncavo. In theory, to have a daughter take the veil, a father had only to provide a dowry and submit proof of a child's age, baptism and purity of blood. In fact, family influence and financial preeminence gained entrance for most professants. The Destêrro's families, frequently descended from the minor nobility of the continent, comprised the landed and mercantile magnates of Salvador. As members of the local elite, they

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[5]José de Araujo Wanderley Pinho, História de um engenho de Recôncavo (Rio de Janeiro, 1946), pp. 58-60; Wiznitzer, Os Judeus, p. 32; ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 4, 8-10 (I, II)-14, 33, 36. The distinction between old and new Christian was legally obliterated in 1773. See Wiznitzer, pp. 147-148.

[6]APB, Ordens régias, LXXXIII, fol. 272v; Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (AHU), Papeis avulsos, Bahia, 1ª série catalogada, 13369, 17422.

staffed the municipal council, purchased significant bureaucratic posts, filled the higher ranks of the prestigious brotherhoods, and maintained the militia units of the Recôncavo. Such a military rank signified social distinction, since it was only the wealthy individual who could outfit a regiment with weapons, ammunition and uniforms.[7] (Table I)

Although the income of these families was derived from various sources, it was the senhor de engenho (the sugar millowner), whose daughters dominated the places of the nuns of the Destêrro. With remarkably little change throughout the eighteenth century, the nunnery served primarily this sector as a repository for its women. As many as 30 percent of the professants' fathers were either senhores de engenho, their immediate descendants, or married to daughters of millowners.[8]

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[7]This information is collated from the biographies of 103 of 130 identifiable parental pairs with offspring in the Destêrro. In compiling this data, the following sources were of particular use: DHAMB, Atas da Câmara (6 vols., Salvador, 1949[?] -1935[?]); José Antônio Câldas, Notícia geral de tôda esta capitania da Bahia . . . (ed. faesim., Salvador, 1951), pp. 429-442, 525-533; APCHB (5 vols., Salvador, 1950-1951), II, 11-353; ASCD, Livro das entradas e profissões . . .; Jaboatão, Revista do Instituto Genealógico da Bahia (4 vols., Salvador, 1945-1948); Afonso Costa, "Achegas genealógicas segundo Jaboatão," Revista do Instituto Histórico da Bahia, 61 (1935), 69-460; Antônio de Araujo de Aragão Bulcão Sobrinho, Familias baianas . . . (3 vols., Salvador, 1946); Affonso Ruy, História da câmara municipal da cidade do Salvador (Salvador, 1955), pp. 347-374. I am grateful to John N. Kennedy for supplying me with useful information about the colonial military.

[8]This 30 percent signifies that 29 of 94 persons about whom such information is available were identified with sugar agriculture. In the same sample, 18 percent (17) were merchants. The remainder were classified variously among such groupings as career soldiers (8), cattle ranchers (6), artisans (1), municipal council members (37), attorneys and judges (7), fishery proprietor (1). Since these headings are not mutually exclusive and not all of them refer strictly to economic activity, their sum is greater than 100 percent.

Closely allied with the sugar growers by ties of kinship, intermarriage and ritual godparentage, proprietors of other extensive landholdings and of numerous head of cattle likewise sought to have their daughters take the veil albeit, in smaller numbers.

However, not only families identified with landed estates placed their progeny in the Destêrro. A significant percentage (18) of the total identifiable fathers were merchants, who vied with planters and cattle ranchers to have their daughters profess as nuns. The businessmen whose children succeeded in gaining entrance to the convent were consistently large-scale entrepreneurs engaged in the marketing of sugar, cattle, tobacco and slaves, as well as the importation of Portuguese goods. José Antônio Caldas in the mid-eighteenth century categorized a number of these men as those who "possess abundant capital to pursue their interests," and "those who "manage a business with great prospects and financial resources."[9]

Acceptance by elitist institutions (the municipal council, the Misericórdia and other brotherhoods included), while accorded to some commercial men, was limited to those with outstanding capital resources, and rarely, if ever, achieved by shopkeepers or artisans. The single tradesman to place a daughter in the Destêrro was Manuel Antunes Lima, who, as a *mestre pedreiro* (engineer) was responsible for much of the construction of the convent. He was, however, an extremely wealthy man, the owner of both urban and possibly rural property, member of the Order of Christ, co-founder of the Lapa Convent and *provedor*

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[9] *Notícia geral*, p. 525.

of the Misericórdia.[10]

There is little doubt that the sugar planter was at the apex of Bahian society. On the other hand, the position of the merchant still lacks definition. The consistent appearance of merchants' daughters among the rosters of the convent demonstrates that certain businessmen had achieved social recognition in the late seventeenth century. Therefore, the hypothesis that the meaningful social penetration of the merchant occurred only after the 1740's must yet be systematically tested. Similarly open to question is the interpretation that the much-cited Iberian prejudice against manual labor and the trades itself deterred the social integration of the prominent mercantile man.[11]

As early as the 1680's the progeny of commercial families entered the Destêrro in visible numbers. In fact, more than 20 percent of the identifiable individuals placing offspring in the Destêrro from 1677 to 1700 were merchants. Inácio de Matos, one of these entrepreneurs, was an extremely affluent man, whose financial stature secured him not only a place on the municipal council, but also a prestigious membership in the Order of Christ. His wealth was a rather influential consideration for the abbess of the Destêrro, when she petitioned to the King in 1687 for the admission of the merchant's daughters.[12] (Figure II)

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[10]For the admissions policy of the Misericórdia, see Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, pp. 120-124. On Manuel Antunes Lima, see Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, pp. 136, 157; APB, Notas de escrituras, LXII, fols. 230-232; LXIV, fols. 349-352.

[11]For a summary of the thesis presented by Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, see his article, "Class, Creed and Color," Supra., fn. 2.

[12]By comparison, 40 percent of these placing women in the Destêrro were planters. On Inácio de Mattos see, DHBNRJ (120 vols., Rio de Janeiro, 1928 ff.), IXC (1950) 82-83; APCHB, II, nos. 3446-3447; Supra., fn. 8

Furthermore, the entry of businessmen's offspring throughout the eighteenth century consistently paralleled that of planters'. No significant change in the proportion of planters' to merchants' daughters entering the nunnery is apparent after the 1740's. When at mid-century, the numbers of women of commercial origins rose, there is a simultaneous increase from landed families as well. Similarly, the greater number of professants drawn from urban Salvador is complemented by an influx of daughters of rural and Recôncavo families.[13]

On the basis of data revealing the social origins of the nuns, the possibility of a limited, albeit certain, fluidity among mercantile, grazing and agricultural elements at the upper echelons of Bahian society emerges. In any event, it is a hypothesis which requires serious investigation. At present, research has not progressed beyond recognition of the problem.[14] However, scattered references suggest that the distinction between those who derived their living from commerce and those whose wealth was invested in land was not as well defined as has been supposed. Moreover, certain merchants' families were known to acquire sugar mills, usually over the span of several

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[13]ASCD, Livro das entradas. This information additionally suggests that Russell-Wood's contention of a rural-urban dichotomy needs reexamination. See Fidalgos, pp. 119-120.

[14]John N. Kennedy, "Bahian Elites, 1750-1822," Hispanic American Historical Review, 43:3 (August, 1973), 415-439.

generations.[15] Emulation of the planter lifestyle may have been of consideration in motivating the merchant's purchase of urban or rural real estate. However, perhaps more critical was the fact that investment in property represented an attractive means of preserving the capital accumulated through business ventures.[16]

The Pires de Carvalho family network (which placed several generations of women in the Desterro) illustrates well the breadth of the economic underpinnings of a sugar-based family, as well as the tendency for members of a sugar, cattle and mercantile elite to intermarry. Domingos Pires de Carvalho, an immigrant from Portugal, amassed a fortune through the ownership of warehouses used for the storage of slaves, sugar and tobacco. His grandson, José Pires de Carvalho (II), was the

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[15]Alfredo Carlos Teixeira Leite, Gênese sócio-econômica do Brasil (Porto Alegre, 1963), pp. 252-258, argues there was a fusion between the interests of planter and merchant. In a list of the sources of income of 71 persons compiled after the 1817 revolution in Pernambuco 22 are identified as either merchants and senhores de engenho or as proprietors of both urban and rural holdings. For the situation in Bahia, see Wanderley Pinho, História, pp. 94, 103; José da Silva Lisboa, "Carta . . . para o Dr. Domingos Vandelli . . . em que lhe dá notícia desenvolvida sôbre a Bahia . . . ABNRJ, XXXII (1914), 501; APB, Notas, CXIV, fols. 180v-182v; Lycurgo Santos Filho, Uma comunidade rural do Brasil antigo (São Paulo, 1956), ch. III, 33-45; Araujo de Aragão, Familias baianas, III, 30-31, 90-91; AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª ser. cat., 10712. Inácio de Matos was a merchant who placed two daughters in the convent in the 1680's. A century later, Inácio de Matos Telles de Menezes, descendant of the above, is identified as a millowner, in spite of his marriage to the daughter of one of Bahia's prominent slavetraders. ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 59(II). Costa, "Achegas," pp. 248-249; Guy, História da câmara, p. 366; Repertório das sesmarias da Bahia (Rio de Janeiro, 1968), pp. 17-18; Supra., fn. 12.

[16]Kennedy, "Bahian Elites," p. 424; Cf., David A. Brading, Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico 1763-1810 (Cambridge, 1971), p. 103.

child of the eminent landowner of the same name and his wife, Teresa Cavalcante e Albuquerque, herself daughter of a foremost senhor de engenho. The fourth José Pires (son of II) had investments both in sugar lands and in urban real estate, and additionally is known to have purchased the bureaucratic office of Secretary of State. A first cousin, also José Pires de Carvalho (III), son of Salvador Pires and Joana Cavalcante, married Leonor Pereira Marinho, sister of the heir to the cattle fortune of the Casa da Torre.[17] (Figure III)

To acknowledge that offspring of mercantile families were accepted by the convent is not to say that social distinctions in colonial society were unimportant. Presumably, this upper stratum sought to maintain its exclusivity by restricting marriages and preventing the dispersal of its wealth through exclusionary inheritance practices.[18] At one time the municipal councillors sought royal recognition of social distinctions within the convent itself by petitioning for the creation of two categories of nuns, aristocrats and commoners. However, the crown lawyer, irritated by the proposal's pretentiousness, argued that such a delineation would be "scandalous because in Brazil the common man affects the airs of a great nobleman."[19] The petition of the aldermen was not based upon idle vanity.

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[17]Pedro Calmon, História da Casa da Torre (Rio de Janeiro, 1939), pp. 133-137; ABNRJ, XXX, 214; Jaboatão, Catálogo, II, 125-126; Costa, "Achegas," p. 294; Caldas, Notícia geral, p. 430; Ruy, História da Câmara, pp. 358-360, 361-363; Russell-Wood, Fidálgos, pp. 374-375.

[18]João Rodrigues de Brito, A economia brasileira no alvorecer do século XIX (Salvador, N.D.), p. 96; DHBNRJ, XVIIC (1952), 113-114; Luis dos Santos Vilhena, A Bahia no século XVIII (Recopilação de notícias soteropolitanas e brasílicas)(3 vols., Bahia, 1969), II, 466.

[19]DHBNRJ, XCVII (1952), 271-273; BNRJ, Manuscritos, II-33, 29, 113.

Since the Misericórdia accepted two separate categories of members (noble and plebeian), there was no reason to suppose why the Desterro could not. The King, nevertheless, chose to deny the request.

The social origins of the remainder of the Desterro's population remain more obscure than those of the nuns of the black veil. Owing to their prominence, information concerning the backgrounds and livelihood of the parents of the religious of the black veil is relatively accessible in sources covering the period. In addition, the convent's registers provide substantial information. Unfortunately, this is not the case for the rest of the nunnery's inhabitants. For the seculars the data is fragmentary and limited. Particularly in the case of the servants, the lesser stature of their families excludes them from genealogies and makes locating them in public records an undertaking of great magnitude. If specific data is therefore frequently unavailable for individual instances, a range of information regarding the general characteristics of lay occupants allows us to deduce some material of importance. The seculars in the convent were divided among the nuns of the white veil (freira conversa or veu branco), secular recluses (recolhida), juvenile wards (educanda), and free servants (serva).

The nuns of the white veil were allocated twenty-five places.[20] Although they too took vows, strict observance of the communal rules concerning fasting and prayer was not required.

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[20]The limit of twenty-five conversas was not established by the first Papal Bull of 1669. Jaboatão, Novo orbe, III, 6, claims the number must have been stipulated by a royal provision of 1676. The first mention of a numerical limitation I have found is in 1688. DHAMB, Cartas do Senado (5 vols., Salvador, 1951[?] - 1953[?]), III, 57-58.

As a group with distinctly less prestige, they lacked a vote in the community, and their dowry amounted to only half that of a nun of the black veil. Admission to the status of lay sister followed the same general procedure as that of the professed religious -- proof of purity of blood and the ability to support oneself were the most essential requirements.

The practice of accepting lay brethern (conversae) originated within medieval monasteries which accommodated seculars to perform such tasks as collection of rentals, the sale of the monastery's produce, and the provisioning of the community. In this way, the religious, spared the necessity of temporal concerns, could devote themselves more fully to the religious life. Since such laymen, accepted for their skill as craftsmen, artisans, tradesmen and merchants, were of humble social origins, their inclusion represented an attempted democratization of monasteries dominated largely by the aristocracy.[21]

The most intriguing aspect of the position of white veil in the Desterro was its complete failure to attract candidates. It appears that during the greater part of the eighteenth century not more than a handful of the places of freira conversa were filled at any one time. Both the municipal council and the nuns themselves deprecated the category and argued for its elimination altogether. Citing their illiteracy and inability to participate in the ritual, the convent's scribe claimed that the nuns of the veu branco

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[21] R. H. Snape, English Monastic Finances in the Later Middle Ages (Cambridge, 1926), pp. 6-8.

were "totally devoid of utility for the nunnery," and that their functions could be performed by the educandas.[22] Limited prestige and definite subordination to the nuns of the *veu preto* meant that the category selected women of modest backgrounds. However, of those potentially interested, many were discouraged either by the dowry or the burden of certifying purity of blood. The governor-general in a letter to the crown argued that even "most bastard daughters were excluded because they were unable to provide the half-dowry required."[23]

While racial purity was an imperative, illegitimate paternity was evidently not regarded as a deterrent for admission to either the white or the black veil. The bastard child of João Luis Ferreira was the subject of an intense inquiry not for her illegitimacy, but because her mother was suspected of being a mulatta. The case was cleared and the girl permitted to enter only when several prominent citizens gave sworn testimony that her mother's ethnic purity was unquestionable. At least three other women (two religious and one secular) are identified in the convent's records as children born out of wedlock.[24]

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[22]AHU, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér cat., 9807 (November 15, 1778); DHAMB, *Cartas*, III, 57-58; Inácio Accioli de Cerqueira e Silva, *Memórias históricas e políticas da . . . Bahia*, ed. Braz do Amaral (6 vols., Salvador, 1919-1940), V, 223; ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 6; DHBNRJ, XC (1950), 39-40; BNRJ, Manuscritos, II-33, 22, 114, no. 1.

[23]BNRJ, Manuscritos, II-33, 22, 114, no. 1; ASCD, Exa. 1, Pasta 18 (I, III).

[24]ASCD, Cxa. 1, *Certidão de limpeza de sangue*, October 12, 1695, Pasta 27; *Livro das entradas*, nos. 66, 70, 122; Cxa. 1, Pastas 13, 18 (I, III); Jaboatão, *Catálogo*, III, 234.

Apart from the freira conversa (white veil), the remaining identifiable secular free inhabitants of the convent were divided into three groups -- educandas, recolhidas and servas. With the exception of the serva, the procedure for entry was almost uniform for the seculars, regardless of age or civil status. Once again, the principal strictures were that the applicant be of Caucasian stock, Christian lineage and capable of supporting her needs within the convent. Parents, relatives, or the boarder herself were required either to furnish an annual amount or an initial contribution to cover the costs of her residence. As in the case of the nun, the annual stipend could be drawn from the earnings of property or capital on loan. On rare occasions, for example, if an applicant possessed a useful talent or was in extreme need, she was admitted with a lesser allowance.[25]

Educandas were young women from the ages of seven to twenty-five, who, as pupils of the nuns, generally entered with aspirations of taking the veil. Since acceptance of a child-ward almost implied eligibility for religious status, the educanda was generally similar in her social origins to the nun of the black veil.[26] Although motivation for entry prior to the novitiate might vary, those girls who became educandas seem to have been women who suffered the loss of a parent. To such "orphans", the convent offered the company

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[25]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 17(II).

[26]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 6, 8, 13, 16(II), 17(I, II, III), 18(I, II, III), 32, 33, 36, concerning the educanda. The records of 37 educandas and recolhidas were examined. Of these the social origins of 18 were traceable. For genealogical sources, Supra., fn. 7.

of relatives, a rudimentary education, and a desirable upbringing. The likelihood of a place as a nun was an additional attraction. The wealthy judge Manuel de Matos Vivieros desired the admission of his twelve-year-old daughter, Maria, "to be educated because of [her] distressed circumstances as a result of the death of her mother."[27] If the needs of a supplicant were considered particularly urgent, even infants were accepted as wards of certain nuns.[28]

The place of recolhida, or secular boarder, was a position traditionally available in monastic centers. While the ruination of a virgin or the adultery of a wife was a common motive for confinement, none seem to have entered the Destêrro on such grounds.[29] The experience of the convent resembled that of Bahia's secular retirement houses; most women sought admission due to widowhood or the absence of a male protider. In the case of the Destêrro, it was also possible for the mother of a nun to become a secular recluse at the death of her husband. Sometimes those widows who found themselves in financial difficulties after discharging

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[27]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 32.

[28]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 16(II). At age six, when Ursula of the Virgins petitioned to be made an educanda, she had been living in the convent for four years in the company of two aunts, both nuns.

[29]For examples of the motivation of the secular recluse see APB, Ordens régias, XXIII, doc. 109; XXV, doc. 36; LXXVIII, fols. 173-175v; LXXX, fols. 85-86; LXXXVI, fol. 201; XC, fols. 17-18, 72-73; IVC, fol. 131; VC, fol. 109; VIIC, fols. 6, 7, 9; IXC, fols. 97; CIV, fols. 7, 8v, 9. See also, AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 2231. Cases of wife-beating, marital infidelity and defloration appear among the above petitions; for recolhidas in the Destêrro, see ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 4, 7, 17 (II), 18(III).

the debts of a deceased husband sought the security of the monastic retreat.[30]

The secular positions in the Destêrro had a substantial appeal, which appeared to vary in accordance with the availability of places of nuns of the black veil. In 1755, when the Destêrro was oversubscribed with 81 religious, there were just 17 secular recluses and 7 pupils. By contrast, following the royal ban on entrance into the religious orders (issued in 1764), the archbishop drew attention to the overabundance of seculars. While the great popularity of the secular positions indeed dismayed him, he failed to connect the growing numbers of seculars with the prohibition on taking the vows.[31]

The secular places in the nunnery had some social utility, primarily for the upper classes. In the first place, few women beyond a privileged minority could afford to sustain themselves as recluses on inherited incomes. Most unmarried, widowed or orphaned females, owing to the workings of the kinship system, found their refuge in the extended family. This may have been more typical of the upper classes in which, owing to economic reasons, family ties were easier to maintain. Nevertheless, census data,

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[30]For petitions of seculars to enter Bahia's retirement houses and convents on financial grounds, see APB, Ordens régias. LXXVIII, fols. 174-175; LXXX, fols. 85-86; LXXXVI, fols. 201; VIC, fol. 131; IC, doc. 27. See also ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 17(II), 18(I).

[31]DHBNRJ, XC (1950),39-40; 58-59; XVIV, 273-274; APCHB, II, no. 4246; ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 6, 8, 14, 32, 36. For a breakdown of religious and secular population of the city, see AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 8814; See also AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6554-6555, 11516, 11563, 11947, 19537; Accioli-Amaral, Memórias, V. 223.

collected from individual households, indicates a large population of single female boarders earning their sustenance by the performance of domestic tasks or by the sale of embroidery and lace. Frequently the adopted woman represented the only white in a family of mulattoes.[32] Secondly, if the linkages and obligations of the family or clan failed, there were urban services responsible for the care of orphans. Both the municipal council and the Misericórdia subsidized wet-nurses to nurture homeless infants.[33]

The lowest category of seculars were the free female servants. Although the attendants of the community were originally limited to fifteen, their actual numbers quickly exceeded this figure. To enter as a servant, a girl submitted her reputation and her Christian heritage as qualifications. Because of its low status, the servile position was not restricted to persons of white ethnicity. According to the Papal Bull founding the convent, those of any racial stock or admixture were to be eligible for the post. In spite of this sanction, not until the 1720's were the first mulattas or blacks accepted even as servants in the Desterro. It is, however, not clear whether this change is due to a growing reluctance on the part of whites to assume vocations filled by Negroes or pardos.[34]

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[32]Herculano Gomes Mathias, Um recenseamento no capitania de Minas Gerais rpt. (Rio de Janeiro, 1969). Although this census was taken of another region, it is likely that the same living arrangements could be found in Bahia.

[33]Thales de Azevedo, Povoamento da cidade do Salvador (Sao Paulo, 1955), pp. 207-209; Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, pp. 304-305, 315-316.

[34]Santos Vilhena, A Bahia no século XVIII (3 vols., Salvador, 1969), I, 137-138. The conclusions concerning the serva are based on a study of 26 petitions. ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 4, 6, 7, 14, 27, 33, 36.

The serva, a woman of humble origins, formed a contrast to the more socially distinguished nun. She approaches the sterotypical image of the orphan, bereft of family, friends, and financial resources to maintain her in society. The case of Florença da Cruz is illustrative. Her petition indicated that she has been orphaned "because of the death of her mother; her father has been away at the mines for many years."[35]

Because data still remains sparse, one can do little more than to raise questions concerning the social and economic backgrounds of those women who sought refuge in the convent as servants. Were they initially daughters of recent immigrants who lacked family ties? Were they poor or distant relations of the nuns? What were the social implications of becoming a white female servant in a society based upon slavery? Were these women possibly drawn from a class of poor, vagrant whites or subsistence farmers? Until more research has been done, these and other questions concerning the patterns of colonial society will remain elusive.

The objective of this chapter has been an analysis of the social composition of the Desterro. Any uni-institutional study of this sort confronts the historian with certain problems. Foremost among them is the question -- to what extent are the findings generalizeable? May we draw conclusions about the entire social complex on the basis of the data? Secondly, we are faced with the problem of writing the history of the illiterate mass of society from sources generated by a privileged and tiny

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[35]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 36.

elite. The obvious consequences are an apparent class bias and a great disparity in the quantity of material available about each sector. While the hardships of the upper class planters, for example, resound throughout the documentation of the period, the existence of the lower classes goes virtually unacknowledged. I have endeavored to solve this problem by using notarial records and petitions for their descriptive information. However, colonial scribes (unaware of their responsibility to future historians) frequently neglected to include such desirable information as an applicant's race, occupation, age, and place of birth. Hence, we are still left with a disturbingly incomplete picture of the lower classes in Bahian colonial society.

Royal Policy

A review of the social composition of the convent leads to a consideration of royal policy which was aimed consistently at a restriction of the female monastic population. The dominant motive behind the crown's action was the fear that conventual seclusion would dimish the number of marriageable women. Since fewer child-bearing females meant a reduction in offspring, the enlargement of the nunnery was viewed as a potential threat to the colony's population growth. One session of the royal councillors is especially revealing. During the debate one advisor proposed that females, like males, deserved the option of freely choosing the religious life. His suggestion was, however, refuted with the argument that "women were more essential for the propagation of the human species than were men."[36]

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[36]DHBNRJ, IXC (1950), 82-83. For other expressions of concern with the population of the colony, Supra., Ch. I, fn. 17.

These preoccupations with the expansion of the Brazilian settlement led the King to maintain a limit of 50 nuns of the black veil in the Destêrro and to prevent the establishment of additional nunneries. Moreover, the crown persistently vetoed the municipal council's myriad petitions for a substitution of the places of the white veil with those of the black.[37]

By the 1730's circumstances induced the King to revise his original policy. First, in spite of royal intentions, the Destêrro's population had expanded far in excess of its stipulated 50 religious of the black veil. A number of women had obtained the crown's approval to enter as supernumeraries in return for meritorious services rendered by their families. However, a more common path to profession was by means of episcopal concession of places of the white veil. Soon after entering, the women granted these positions of lower status transferred to the more prestigious véu preto. By 1718 more than 72 women occupied the desired position of black veil.[38]

Secondly, and similarly demonstrating the ineffectuality of royal policy, was the continued flow of women to Portuguese houses. Rather than impede the dangerous traffic, limitations

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[37]BNRJ, Manuscritos, II-33, 29, 113; II-33, 29, 114, no. 1; II-33, 22, 114; DHAMB, Cartas, IV, 54-55; III, 57-58; Accioli-Amaral, Memórias, V. 223.

[38]BNRJ, Manuscritos, II-33, 29, 113; DHBNRJ, XVIC (1952), 9. In 1708 there were 51 nuns of the véu preto, 17 of the véu branco and four supernumeraries. These latter two categories had transferred to the black veil by 1718. For the acceptance of women beyond the allotted 50 places, see DHBNRJ, 272-273; ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 6, 35; APCHB, II, 3375, 3446-3447, 4246.

on the capacity of the Desterro had not discouraged those who could not be accommodated locally from seeking places elsewhere. According to the municipal council as many as 8 or 10 women sailed for the metropolis each year.[39]

A third factor undoubtedly influencing royal policy was Bahia's demographic expansion. In 1717 the municipal councillors claimed that the population of Salvador and the Recôncavo had tripled in size in the last thirty years. Contemporary estimates, in fact, corroborate this contention, as census data indicates an increase in the city's size from 21,601 inhabitants in 1706 to 39,209 in 1718.[40]

Although it had become apparent that the seclusion of 50 or 100 women had not curtailed the rapid growth of the captaincy, the crown's fears were not without foundation. A low incidence of marriage seems to have been a hallmark of social behavior both on the continent and in the colony.[41] According to census data from 1775, of Bahian white females between the ages of fourteen to sixty, nearly as many women remained celibate as married. Moreover, from the scattered references to marriage patterns of patrician sectors, it may be inferred that upper class weddings were also

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[39]DHBNRJ, XCVII (1952), 189-194; BNRJ, Manuscritos, II-33, 29, 113; Arquivo Nacional (AN), Cod. 952, XXVI, fol. 398.

[40]Accioli-Amaral, Memórias, II, 176; AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 2010, 2188; Ward J. Barrett and Stuart B. Schwartz, "Two Colonial Sugar Economies: Morelos, Mexico and Bahia, Brazil, A Comparison" (Unpublished manuscript). I am grateful to Professor Schwartz for making the paper available to me.

[41]Adrien Balbi, Essai statistique sur Le Royaume de Portugal et D'Algarve . . . (2 vols., Paris, 1822), I, 220; AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 8813; J. Hajnal, "European Marriage Patterns in Perspective," Population in History, eds. D.V. Glass and D.E.C. Eversley, (Chicago, 1965), pp. 101-146.

infrequent.[42] Evidence on the behavior of fifty-three families of the Bahian elite indicates that generally only one daughter per conjugal family unit married, while the remainder either entered nunneries or remained celibate. (Figure IV) In 1739 the governor general complained that in the past four years only two marriages of persons of repute had taken place.[43]

The result of these considerations was a revision of earlier royal policies that took into account both the need to encourage marriages and the demand for an expanded cloister. The first step was the prohibition in 1732 of the passage of unmarried women to Portugal. Although this provision did not completely end the traffic, the necessity of securing royal permission for the journey added a deterrent.[44] Thereafter, the crown permitted the creation of three additional

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[42]Richard Trexler, "Le célibat à la fin du Moyen Age: Les réligieuses de Florence," Annales, 6 (November-December, 1972), 1338-1339; R. Burr Litchfield, "Demographic Characteristics of Florentine Patrician Families," Journal of Economic History, 29 (1969), 191-205. See also T. H. Hollingsworth, "A Demographic Study of the British Ducal Families," Population in History, eds. Glass and Eversley, pp. 354-378.

[43]Silva Lisboa, "Carta," p. 505; Accioli-Amaral, Memórias, II, 176.

[44]AN, Cod. 952, XXVI, fols. 318, 398. The viceroys of Brazil had earlier argued for a ban on the traffic. See APB, Ordens régias, III, doc. 108; BNRJ, Manuscritos, II-33, 29, 113. For petitions to the crown, see APB, Ordens régias, XXXVII, doc. 21, fols. 67-67v; LIII, fols. 167-172; LXXXIII, docs. 35, 57; LXXVI, doc. 77, fol. 175. See also AN, Cod. 952, XXIX, fol. 158; XXX, fols. 251, 265; XXXI, fol. 159; XXXII, fols. 308; XXXIII, fol. 241; XXXV, fol. 117; XXXVII, fol. 286; XXXXI, fol. 48.

Bahian nunneries in the 1730's and 1740's. The Lapa Convent was founded in 1733 by João de Miranda Ribeiro. The Ursuline House of Mercês owed its origins in 1735 to the patronage of D. Luisa Montserrate, daughter of the Bahian bandeirante, Pedro Barbosa Leal. The third, the Convento do Sagrado Coração de Jesus e Soledade was originally founded by the Jesuit father Malagrida as a retirement house. In 1751 women were permitted to take the vows there.[45] The creation of three additional religious institutes had the effect of broadening slightly the social base from which the professants were drawn. Dowry requirements were less stringent. A religious was simply required to provide for her self-support. Records of endowments and contributions reveal that they were generally inhabited by women of modest means. The deposits made by novices of the Convent of Soledade (reputedly the poorest) range from virtually nothing to 1,600,000 reis in the 1740's. One woman brought as her dowry a tobacco and maniec holding which the convent sold for 800,000 reis.[46] Throughout the 1750's appeals to increase the size of Bahia's four nunneries were repeatedly denied. In 1764, when the urban religious population of both sexes had reached roughly 400 persons a royal decree banned further admissions to the Orders.[47]

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[45] AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 128-130; 382-383; 499-500; 6554-6555.

[46] AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 499-500. See also no. 8814 for the relative numbers of personal slaves in each convent for a rough index of their comparative wealth.

[47] AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª, sér. cat., 2188; ASCD, Livro das entradas, no. 193; Cxa. 1, Pasta 29. Pinto de Aguiar, ed. Aspectos de economia colonial (Salvador, 1957), pp. 24-25. The total male clerical population, including those in the Recôncavo, numbered about 500. See ABNRJ, XXXII (1914), 438; AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 8814.

What was the impact in the latter eighteenth century of secluding 200 marriageable females in a population of approximately 3,000 white women? The archbishop argued that the effects of cloistering these women were negligible.[48] The overall consequences of secluding less than 10 percent of white women were probably slight indeed if one considers that in the latter third of the eighteenth century Caucasians constituted less than a third of the total population.[49] However, with regard to the elite, one wonders if the admissions of nearly 50 percent of their female progeny in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries did not severely inhibit their capacity to reproduce.[50]

Of Bahian nunneries, the Destêrro Convent housed the largest female population. To a limited extent, the nunnery acted as an orphanage, or as a shelter for the indigent and homeless. However, in spite of some variance in social origins, the majority of the Destêrro's inhabitants were drawn from a select group of highly interrelated families. For the course of a century, these same names dominate not only the convent, but also the membership rolls of the Misericórdia, the prestigious brotherheods, the municipal council, the royal bureaucracy and the powerful commissions of the military. It was largely this local elite -- a combined stratum of cattle, mercantile and sugar interests -- whose daughters occupied the cloister of the Destêrro.

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[48]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 2010.

[49]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 8813; ABNRJ, XXXII (1914), 438; Silva Lisboa, "Carta," p. 505.

[50]The interesting possibility is that few marriages and high infant mortality may have resulted in the extinction of certain "old" Bahian families, and further allowed the penetration of "newcomers" into the upper social echelons. See Litchfield, "Demographic Characteristics . . .," 197-203.

III THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CONVENT IN BAHIAN SOCIETY

> The house . . . was neither better nor worse than the average. Most of the nuns were young noblewomen, who had embraced monastic life, not out of any overmastering desire to follow the evangelical counsels. . . but because there was not enough money at home to provide them with dowries commensurate with their birth.
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> ----Huxley, The Devils of Loudun, p. 95

The convent of eighteenth century Bahia performed a role unparalleled by that of any modern institution. Largely because the nunnery lacks an appropriate analog, it is difficult to conceive of the variety of motivations which prompted the taking of the veil. Indeed, a host of interrelated concerns -- religious, economic and social -- were responsible for the overwhelming appeal of the nunnery in colonial Brazil. Thus, in seeking to explore and explain the motives for interning women in the cloister, the following chapter will be devoted to a discussion of the religious, social and economic utility of the nunnery.

Religious Function

Religiosity was no doubt a prime consideration in placing a daughter in the Desterro. Brazilian Catholicism dominated society with its impressive physical structures, as well as its elaborate pageantry and ritualized ethos. Its very pervasiveness suggests the inevitability of its presence among factors motivating the choice of convent life.

That the fear of God and concern with immortality of the soul was much in the minds of eighteenth-century Bahians is well illustrated by the correspondence of the nunnery.[1]

Life in the cloister could no doubt be viewed as a desirable alternative to the temptations and hazards of the temporal world. The lives of several nuns, recorded by the church chronicler Jaboatão, reveal the quality of piety of some who dedicated themselves to monastic life. What was the nature of the conventual ethos?

Although biographical sketches of a number survive, two nuns in particular merited the attention of their contemporaries for their remarkable religiosity. Maria da Soledade, daughter of João Borges Macedo and Maria de Barros was one of three daughters in a family of ten children to enter the convent. It is said that her betrothal to a nobleman from India prompted the ten-year-old Maria to swear a perpetual oath of chastity. When her mother discovered the vow, she canceled the marriage plans and allowed her daughter to take the veil soon after her father's death.[2] Her observance of the vows and ritual was extraordinary. She allegedly began praying at five A.M. and remained kneeling until noon. Apart from her prayers she faithfully honored the oath of silence and barely spoke to any of the community. During

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[1]ASCD, See especially Cxa. 1, Pastas 19, 21, 29.

[2]Antônio de Santa Maria Jaboatão, Novo orbe seráfico brasílico (1761, rpt. Rio de Janeiro, 1861), Pt. 2, III, 747-751, 754-757; Jaboatão, "Catálogo genealógico," Revista do Instituto Genealógico da Bahia (4 vols., Salvador, 1945-1948), III, 231-232; Afonso Costa, "Achegas genealógicas segundo Jaboatão," Revista do Instituto Histórico da Bahia, 61 (1935), 261; ASCD, Livro das entradas e profissões, no. 39.

Mass she frequently became enraptured and entered a trance-like state. Devoting most of her time to prayer, she spent her remaining hours making lace altar cloths with material purchased from income designated for her food and sustenance. Her own habit was of the simplest and coarsest cloth, and in spite of her own proficiency in needlework, she deliberately chose vestments made by persons less skilled. Ironically, her virtues did not always earn her the respect and appreciation of her fellow nuns. In particular, her silence on one occasion was taken for disapproval and she was imprisoned for eleven days.[3]

Preoccupation with death, mystical reveries, prophecies and self-inflicted punishment were characteristic expressions of eighteenth-century Catholicism. Far more extreme than Maria de Soledade in the demonstrations of her faith, Madre Vitória da Encarnação earned a reputation for her saintliness which is today regarded by the nuns as a significant element in the Desterro's history. Her encased skull, her full-scale portrait and her whipping cords have become exhibited relics that dominate the room housing the nunnery's archive.[4]

Unlike Maria of the Solitude, Vitória did not enter the convent willingly. Although her own home, noteworthy for its piety, was considered the equivalent of a cloister by one contemporary, the young Vitória was not attracted to the religious

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[3]Jaboatão, Novo orbe, Pt. 2, III, 747-774.

[4]The gathering of the data was accomplished in her mystical presence. For reference to the visions and spiritual life of Mexican nuns, see Asunción Lavrin, "Values and Meaning of Monastic Life for Nuns in Colonial Mexico," Catholic Historical Review, 58:3 (October, 1972), 380-382; Cf., Claudia Koonz, "Earthly Life and Heavenly Visions at Two Medieval Convents," (Unpublished manuscript).

calling. Even after several dreams of the child Jesus leading her along a floral path to His House, the Destêrro, she vehemently rejected the vocation. Only on receiving a fearful vision of a ship, where some passengers rode below deck suffering from foul odors and pestilence, while others enjoyed fresh breezes and good health in the sun-soaked area above, did she choose to sail on the Lord's vessel.[5]

A more secular interpretation of her case (taking into particular account parental intentions) leads to the conclusion that young Vitória, daughter of a prominent infantry officer, entered the convent under the coercion of her father. After first placing two daughters in a Portuguese convent prior to the founding of the Destêrro, Bartolomeu Nabo Correa put Vitória and a sister in the Destêrro. Ostensibly converted to the role chosen for her, Vitória said her vows when she was twenty-five years old.[6]

Madre Vitória da Encarnação developed countless and inestimable virtues with the passage of time. Her hagiographer, Jaboatão, records her saintliness, her humility, her concern for others and her mortification of the flesh. With medical skill invested in her by the Saviour, she cured ill slaves from smallpox by accommodating them in her own cell. Having a low opinion of herself, she refused the honor of conventual office and assisted the slaves in their duties. She is even said to have demonstrated her humility by taking her meals in the kitchen from a dog's plate.

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[5]Jaboatão, Novo orbe, Pt. 2, III, 686-689

[6]ASCD, Livro das entradas, nos. 33, 34; DHAMB, Atas da Câmara (6 vols., Salvador, 1949[?] - 1955[?]), IV, 189; BNRJ, XXXII (1914), 145; APCHB (5 vols., Salvador, 1950-1951), I, nos. 2678-2679.

Sister Vitória was reputedly capable of performing miracles, of prophesying events and of communicating with the Lord. Shortages of wood were resolved with her predictions of His intentions to provide it at a certain time. On another occasion she witnessed a demon of straw danging in the cloister which she interpreted correctly as an omen of a coming dispute among the nuns. A third prophecy concerned her own death. She predicted that shortly after dying she would become hideously disfigured. As a consequence, she would be carried to her grave by slaves, rather than by her peers, the nuns. These prophecies were also realized. On her deathbed she is said to have taken on the appearance of a leper, her distorted features doubtless a consequence of her self-inflicted castigation. Not even death terminated her pious deeds. Madre Vitória was able to intercede with the Lord on behalf of persons who showed her veneration. In one case the earth from her grave was used to cure a tumor.

Most outstanding of her qualities was that of endurance. She tolerated not only abuse and insults from slaves, but also actual physical blows. Glorying in her pain, she spent her nights in a vigil of self-mortification,many mornings leaving the walls around her covered with blood. Fridays she routinely performed the ritual of the Seven Stations of the Cross, bearing a crucifix so intolerable heavy that two other nuns were unable to lift it. On attempting to raise the cross, one is said to have commented, " Never again . . . God doesn't want us to kill ourselves."[7] At each Station

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[7]Jaboatão, Novo orbe, Pt. 2, III, 704.

she chastised herself vigorously for more than half an hour -- sometimes so severely that the following day she had to hide the extensive swelling and bruises on her face with bandages. Castigations were not restricted to Fridays or evenings. She regularly wore a hair-shirt, sometimes covered her forehead with a crown of thorns, and commonly disciplined herself with a rope embellished by metal barbs.

An explanation of the complexity of the psychology of this penitent would require a profound knowledge and comprehension of Catholic medieval doctrine and observance. However, it is apparent that the religious values of the time transfigured personal unhappiness into virtue. Suffering was surely the very mainstay of Madre Vitória's existence. Self-hatred, resentment of her life and satisfaction achieved from abuse could, however, be camouflaged in a cloak of martyrdom. Even the desire for death hastened by self-inflicted brutality could be rationalized as a closer approximation to the Saviour. But whereas individual cases may in part be explained as personal suffering which found expression in the mysticism of religion, the almost universal acceptance of such practices remains deeply puzzling.[8]

Social Function

Paradoxically, the very omnipresence of the Church diminished the role of religion as a motive for taking the veil. Although religiosity may have been an inevitable component, a number of factors -- largely socially induced --

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[8] Ibid., 684-746.

moved the leading families of Bahia to place their daughters in a nunnery. A quest for prestige, family tradition and the desire for the seclusion of women were preponderant motives. However, the popularity of the cloister is only partially explained by the desire for social recognition, adherence to custom and the preoccupation with female purity. In order to grasp fully the social role of the Desterro, the function of the nunnery must be examined within the context of the values and aspirations of the Bahian elite.

The appeal of convent life is best described within the framework of behavior patterns of the colony's social notables. Among Portuguese upper-class practices that which elicited the greatest comment by strangers was the harem-like seclusion of Luso-Brazilian women. Some have attributed this behavior to a Portuguese tradition of misogyny, to the irascible jealousy of the Latin male, or possibly to the cultural heritage of the Moors.[9] Although such factors may have been influential, it is not unlikely that upper-class Lusitanian over-protection of women was in reality aimed ultimately at the preservation of the class structure and at maintaining the exclusivity of the elite.

Bahian society, one of evident stratification, was characterized by certain attitudes. Particularly prominent among the upper class was the preoccupation with the

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[9] F. Frezier, Rélation du voyage de la mer du Sud aux cotes du Chily et du Pérou (Paris, 1732), p. 275; F. Froger, Rélation d'un voyage fait en 1695, 1696, and 1698 (Amsterdam, 1699), pp. 142-143; Gilberto Freyre, The Masters and the Slaves (New York, 1966), p. 223; Robert Southey, A History of Brazil (3 vols., London, 1817-1819), II, 676-679; Francisco de Mello, Carta de guia de casados, ed. João Gaspar Simões (Lisbon, 1965); Thales de Azevedo, "Família, casamento e divorcio no Brasil," Journal of Inter-American Studies, 3:2 (April, 1961), 215.

preservation of the kinship network and the concomitant deemphasis on the conjugal pair. Marriage was therefore regarded as an alliance intended to fortify the extended family.

In Salvador's colonial society, marriage practices of the elite were aimed at maintaining its exclusivity. Matrimony was restricted to the extended family and limited associate peer group. Moreover, courtship practices were strictly regulated, as the freedom to select a partner represented a potential threat to the preservation of the social heirarchy.[10] Early marriage could therefore deprive the bride of the opportunity to generate feelings for an unacceptable mate and prevent the risk of the possibility of a marriage across class lines. One popular lyric suggests that -- aside from restricting the adolescent's exposure -- the aim of early marriage was to make the most of the female's reproductive years:

> Mother, marry us soon
> While we are young maidens
> Corn planted late
> Never yields a good crop.[11]

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[10]I owe the framework of this discussion to the analysis of William J. Goode, "The Theoretical Importance of Love," American Sociological Review, 24 (August, 1959), 42-47. See also Verena Martinez-Alier, "Elopement and Seduction in Nineteenth Century Cuba," Past and Present, 55 (May, 1972), 91-129. She points out that social class endogamy was a consequence of a conception of society as ascriptive and hierarchical. Elopement, in that it meant free choice of a marriage partner, challenged this view of society.

[11]Freyre, Masters, pp. 363-364. It is known that both age and frequency of marriage are class-related. In Europe the tendency was for marriage to be earlier among the upper class. General marriage patterns vary also according to region. In northern Europe marriage was late (between 25 and 30 years) and nearly universal. In southern Europe marriage occurred earlier but was less common. For comparative purposes, see E. A. Wrigley, Population and History (New York, 1969), pp. 100-101; 103-106; 116-119; 140-142.

With research in its present state it is, however, not possible to determine the age at which upper-class colonists married. According to the records of the Inquisition, women allegedly married between the ages of twelve and fourteen in the sixteenth century.[12] However, census data of the late eighteenth century (1775) reveals that most white women married in their twenties, thirties or forties.[13] Only a small minority married earlier. A possible explanation of the discrepancy is that in the course of over two centuries, the Bahian elite altered its marriage patterns. The scarcity of women in the early colony may indeed have been responsible for the younger age at marriage, whereas in subsequent centuries the difficulty of finding an appropriate male suitor may have resulted in a rise in marital age of the female.[14]

The eligibility of the male suitor was determined mainly by social rank and family ties. It was essential that

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[12]Freyre, Masters, pp. 363-364, citing the records of the Inquisition. Carlos Ott, Formação e evolução étnica da cidade do Salvador (2 vols., Salvador, 1955-1957); I, 184.

[13]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 8813; 8840.

[14]On the other hand, it is altogether possible that from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, elite females consistently married in their early teens. They may therefore be represented among those who married prior to age twenty. For a seminal essay which suggests many parallels with the Bahian elite, see R. Burr Litchfield, "Demographic characteristics of Florentine Patrician Families . . .," The Journal of Economic History, 29:2 (June, 1969); See also T. H. Hollingsworth, "A demographic Study of the British Ducal Families," Population in History, ed., D.V. Glass and D.E.C. Eversley (Chicago, 1965), 354-378. He shows that the mean age at marriage rose for the English peerage from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. For a general view, see J. Hajnal, "European Marriage Patterns in Perspective," Population in History, eds., Glass and Eversley, pp. 101-146.

he be free of the taint of African or Jewish ancestry. His age, on theother hand, did not merit consideration. According to one eighteenth-century census it appears that men generally married ten years later than did women. Not only were husbands commonly older than their wives, but it was also usual for the partners to be more than a generation apart.[15]

Segregation of the female and an emphasis on chastity should therefore be seen as a practice intended to restrict marriages, ultimately for the purpose of reinforcing the social hierarchy. Gilberto Freyre's vivid description of the containment and isolation of the virtuous maid within the thick walls of the plantation house signified the action prompted by elite fears.[16] To be sure, occasional lapses in vigilance meant that a few individuals managed to marry persons of their choosing.[17] However, among at least certain portions of the elite marriages were successfully circumscribed and took place infrequently.

Data based on the seventeenth to eighteenth century marriage patterns of the progeny of 53 prominent Bahian families, each with at least one daughter in the Destêrro, reveals to a striking degree the controls exercised over marriage. The families considered, ranging from those with one to 13 children, had an average of 5.1 offspring who reached maturity. Of these,

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[15]On racial concerns, Supra., ch. 2, fn. 2; For the variation in ages of the married population, see AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 8813.

[16]Freyre, Masters, pp. 352-354.

[17]See Stuart Schwartz, Sovereignty and Society in Colonial Brazil: The High Court of Bahia and its Judges 1609-1751 (Berkeley, 1973), pp. 347-348, for the romantic elopement of Antônio da Rocha Pitta. The author generously provided me with an excerpt of his unpublished manuscript.

2.0 per conjugal unit were male and 3.1 female. The common practice was to marry off the eldest son. Only rarely were more than two children wedded, and frequently not a single daughter acquired a husband. Indeed 47 or 88 percent of the families studied placed all of their female offspring in the convent, rather than marry them.[18]

Such statistics raise many questions. Had second and third sons been permitted to marry prior to the eighteenth century? Were collateral family lines established in this manner? Would the infrequency of marriages combined with high mortality rates not result in the extinction of certain families within several generations? Would the ensuing gaps in the upper echelons facilitate the entry of upwardly mobile elements? Litchfield's fascinating study of the Florentine patriciate reveals that restrictive upper-class marriage practices did ultimately destroy the reproductive vitality of many noble families and allow for their replacement by other sectors. By contrast to the Bahian figures, (77 percent) Litchfield's findings indicate that in seventeenth century Florence 44 percent of aristocratic women were consigned to

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[18]These families represent almost 40 percent of the 131 identifiable families whose daughters were admitted to the Destêrro as nuns of the black veil from 1677 to 1810. In tabulating the numbers of offspring, I have assumed that those children who died as infants were omitted from the genealogies. My figures are therefore lower than the actual numbers of children born. Moreover, the apparent excess of females over males is explained by a greater accuracy in accounting for the females. Sons who went to Portugal, joined the religious orders, or left Bahia for the mining regions were no doubt frequently forgotten by genealogists. On the other hand, the Destêrro's registers supplied the names of those women who were omitted from local genealogies because they took the veil. For sources, Jaboatão, Catálogo genealógico and Costa, "Achegas," have been used in conjunction with ASCD, Livro das entradas.

life in a nunnery.[19]

Even granting that this sample is skewed in favor of those families with a predilection for placing women in the convent, the recurrent appearance of the same names on the rosters of the municipal council, the brothers of higher standing in the Misericórdia and in high bureaucratic positions in the royal service suggests that their behavior may have been typical of the dominant elite. After allowing for the possibility of exaggeration, the survey demonstrates remarkably well the role of the convent as an institutional mechanism designed to isolate potentially marriageable women.

Since marriages were arranged, authoritative parental persuasion was no doubt similarly used in placing many a daughter in the nunnery. In Europe the monastery commonly served as a repository for the family's unmarriageable children. One historian conjures up the image of a monastic population of the maimed, crippled and disfigured cast-offs of a genteel society.[20] In the Bahian case the words of the crown testify eloquently to the coercive tactics used to have women take the veil:

> many women with the pretext of becoming religious [are] forced by their fathers or mothers, [and] constrained in their will, which ought to remain free, to choose the state [of religion]. . . .[21]

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[19]Litchfield, "Demographic characteristics," p. 203.

[20]R. W. Southern, The Making of the Middle Ages (New Haven, 1962), p. 162, quoting Udalricus, Consuetudines Cluniacenses, P. L., Vol. 149, 635-636.

[21]AN, Cod. 952, XXVI, fol. 398.

Whether it was prompted by the physical defects of the child or by other reasons, parental decision was responsible for a child's entering the novitiate. Maria Antônia de Jesus, a nun in the Desterro, revealed to the King that she had been "induced by her father's persuasion to enter the convent [when still] a minor of twelve to thirteen years of age."[22]

In spite of the involuntary confinement of many women in the cloister, rebellious behavior rarely resulted in a total rejection of conventual life. Because of the ban on re-entry, departures from the convent among both religious and seculars were rare and few motives warranted a final exit. There is, for example, no record of any nun abandoning the cloister. In the case of the secular inhabitants (educandas and recolhidas), aside from a single expulsion on moral grounds, only imminent death, marriage or flight achieved leave from the nunnery.[23]

While legal channels may have provided a means of departure, they were a slow, bothersome, expensive and frustrating route to justice. Immediate remedies could be achieved only by covert action. Under the circumstances of an involuntary internment, flight was the logical alternative. A notorious case involved the two daughters of Helena de Lima who had been placed in

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[22]Crown to governor general, APB, Ordens régias, LXXV, fols. 1ff. (July 21, 1779). In the process, she had also been compelled to renounce her inheritance to her brother.

[23]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 40. Petition of Leonor do Sacramento to leave the cloister in 1705 because she is suffering from the common malady, achaques. The appeal of Joanna Perpetua Coracão to depart in order to marry is in Cxa. 1, Pasta 39. For the expulsion of a secular, see Livro das eleições e profissões, fols. 15-15v.

the Desterro against their mother's will by her lover, a friar. After six years of confinement the educandas, in an elaborately designed escape, were met in carriages by their suitors to be spirited deftly away. Before the plan could come to fruition, the women were apprehended in flight and escorted to the Retirement House of the Misericórdia by order of the governor-general.[24]

The rarity of renunciation of convent life in spite of the probably coercive nature of the confinement suggests that the nunnery served a commonly accepted social need. The cloister did, in fact, function principally as a receptacle for elite women in ambiguous social circumstances -- the commonest of which was celibacy. Indeed, the most compelling motive for having a daughter take the veil was the fear of contracting a socially prejudicial marriage. As matrimony was considered a means of augmenting a family's wealth or social standing, particular care was taken in its arrangement. If a desirable match could not be provided, the convent was the preferred alternative for women of good breeding.

The key to attracting qualified suitors was a girl's marriage portion, which in essence constituted a lure for interested young men. Lack of a dowry consistent with the social aspirations of the family led many to confine their female offspring to a nunnery. When listing the reasons for having a daughter take the veil, contemporaries never fail to mention

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[24] APB, Ordens régias, XVII, doc. 55A, fols. 182v-183; ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 6; for another instance of the flight of a recolhida, see ABNRJ, XXXI (1913), 431.

the inability to furnish a marriage dowry. The eighteenth-century historian Sebastião da Rocha Pitta wrote that Bahia's elite desired the convent "for the purpose of retiring women of leading families who did not have sufficient dowries to enable them to marry in keeping with their birth."[25] Far from a Bahian novelty, this was a practice likewise observed in the most aristocratic of European families. Aldous Huxley wrote of one convent of much greater notoriety than the Destêrro:

> The house of Ursuline nuns, which was established at Loudon in 1626, was neither better nor worse than the average. Most of the nuns were young noblewomen, who had embraced monastic life, not out of any overmastering desire to follow the evangelical counsels and achieve Christian perfection, but because there was not enough money at home to provide them with dowries commensurate with their birth and acceptable to suitors of corresponding rank.[26]

The incapacity to endow daughters for marriage, particularly among families whose wealth derived from sugar agriculture, had its roots in the economic insecurity of the planters' position. The millowner in the eighteenth century was in

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[25] História da américa portuguesa (3rd.ed., Salvador, 1950), p. 251; Luis dos Santos Vilhena, A Bahia no século XVIII (3 vols., Salvador, 1969), II, 449; José Antônio Caldas, Noticia geral de tôda esta capitania da Bahia (ed. facsim., Salvador, 1951), p. 19.

[26] The Devils of Loudun: A Study in the Psychology of Power Politics and Mystical Religion in the France of Cardinal Richelieu (New York, 1959), p. 95; For a work on New Spain's nunneries which examines family finances to arrive at the same conclusion, see Sister Ann Miriam Gallagher, RSM, "The Family Background of the Nuns of Two Monasteries in Colonial Mexico: . . . 1724-1822," (Unpublished PhD. dissertation, Dept. of History, Catholic University, 1972). I am grateful to Asunción Lavrin for supplying me with an excerpt of this work.

the difficult situation of having to maintain a lifestyle required by his privileged social status, and, for the most part, of being financially unable to sustain it. Since the crisis of the latter seventeenth century, the sugar sector had never reattained its former position of affluence. The gradual trend toward recovery during the initial decades of the eighteenth century was partially obscured by a rise in prices of slaves and consumables due to competition from the mining district, and by fluctuations in sugar sales and earnings. Aggravating the crisis was the perpetual shortage of specie in the colonies. Many were reduced to a state of penury with their lands, mills, cattle, slaves, and even their future crops mortgaged to their creditors. Contemporaries record the widespread misery, while distressed pleas for relief punctuated the correspondence to the King.[27]

Such economic insecurity and the threat of downward mobility fostered competition for social status and an emphasis on sustaining at least the appearance of wealth. The practice of entailing estates was one method used to preserve the financial status quo, and to prevent dispersal and diminution of a family's resources. One bitter critic recorded that rather than reduce the family fortune by dividing it among a number of heirs, some willed their property intact to their

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[27]Pinto de Aguiar, ed. Aspectos da economia colonial (Salvador, 1957); also printed in ABNRJ, "Discurso preliminar histórico introdutivo com natureza de descrição economica da comarca e cidade do Salvador," XXVII, 281-348. See also Wenceslau Pereira da Silva, "Parecer . . . em que se propoem os meios mais convenientes para suspender a ruina . . . Bahia, 12 de fevereiro de 1738, ABNRJ, XXXI (1913), 27-31; APB, Ordens régias, XXIII, doc. 21 (March 19, 1727); LXXII, fols. 69-69v (July 6, 1759); José de Wanderley Pinho, História de um engenho do Recôncavo (Rio de Janeiro, 1946), pp. 205-211.

firstborn, "all with the aim of concentrating the [family] wealth in a single son [to flatter] the vanity of the family with the lustre of a corrupt affluence nourished by the tears of his brothers."[28] In 1717 José Pires de Carvalho, alderman, fidalgo (nobleman), and one of Salvador's most respected citizens, petitioned the King for permission to admit his daughters to the Desterro because his estate was entailed and indivisible, and he was unable to marry off his daughters to persons of equal station. Although the King refused his request, Pires de Carvalho succeeded in having all five of his female offspring take the veil.[29] (Figure III) Moreover, in still another instance, royal correspondence revealed that the nun Maria Antônia de Jesus had been forced to yield her maternal and paternal inheritance to her brother when she was confined to the convent.[30]

Not only the extent and value of one's domain, but a person's dress, hospitality and possessions were also measures of social and financial standing. Hence, competitive and conspicuous consumption was commonplace. In fact, the uncertainties of the plantation economy fostered spending. Anticipation of good harvests in the future discouraged saving, while fear of bad ones encouraged planters to indulge themselves at least temporarily. Antonil explicitly associated the mania to consume with the ability to provide for

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[28]Rodrigues de Brito, A economia brasileira no alvorecer do século XIX (Salvador, N.D.), p. 96.

[29]DHBNRJ, XVIIC (1952), 113-114; ASCD, Livro das entradas, nos. 89, 96, 104, 108, 109.

[30]APB, Ordens régias, LXXV, fols. 1ff.

one's children:

> More horses for prestige, than are necessary, horn players, trumpeters, musicians, obsequious lackeys, superfluous invitations, banquets, litters and gambling. And in this manner some, from their positions as wealthy millowners, are reduced within a few years to poor and wretched farmers without a dowry left for their daughters.[31]

Little is known about dowries. However, it is probable that, as indices of social position, they were regarded as grounds for competition for status. They do not appear to have been intended exclusively for women. The rural families of Brazil, like those of the English peerage, provided for both sons and daughters. In the case of one cattle rancher, his son complained that he had been slighted, and that his sister's dowry was of greater value. Although the exact nature of the marriage portion still remains elusive, available date suggests that it could be of cash or kind. The envied sibling mentioned above received an endowment of ten slaves, one hundred head of cattle, twelve oxen, one riding horse, one mule and some silver valuables. Her trousseau was an additional expense.[32]

The value of the dote was certainly relative to the class of the betrothed. The daughter of the prominent João Peixoto Viegas was sent to Portugal to marry a nobleman in the

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[31]André João Antonil, Cultura e opulência do Brasil por suas drogas e minas, annot. Andrée Mansuy, Travaux Memoires de l'Institut des Hautes Etudes, de l'Amerique Latine, n. 21 (Paris, 1968), p. 134; See also, Santos Vilhena, A Bahia, I, 185; Wanderley Pinho, História, pp. 319-320.

[32]Lycurgo Santos Filho, Uma comunidade rural do Brasil antigo (São Paulo, 1956), pp. 43, 127; Lawrence Stone, The Crisis of the Aristocracy (Oxford, 1965), p. 507, points out that in England by the seventeenth century the marriage portion had climbed to the equivalent of a year's income.

late seventeenth century with a fabulous marriage portion of 40,000 cruzados, (19,200,000 reis), a sum which probably exceeded the level of most dowries of the period. The two daughters of Paulo de Argolo in 1779 each received allocations of 9,000,000 to 10,000,000 reis, approximately five times the dowry of their sister who entered the Destêrro.[33] By comparison, women of modest circumstances dowered by the Misericórdia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries received at most, 100,000 reis, or .01 of the Argolo endowment.[34]

As an indicator of prestige and status, the endowment was probably responsive to fluctuations of the economy. In periods of prosperity it is likely that the level of dowries rose, enabling more women to marry, Once the economy entered a decline the provision of a dowry in keeping with the family's status grew appreciably more difficult. Under these circumstances, the numbers of celibate women, or entrants into the convent rose.

It appears that the economic problems of the 1740's and 1750's complained of by contemporaries were accompanied by an increase in numbers of women entering the convent.[35]

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[33]Jaboatão, Catálogo genealógico, III, 216-217; José de Araujo Wanderley Pinho, "Uma partilha dos bens no Recôncavo da Bahia em 1779," . . . Anais do Congresso Comemorativo (ACC) (4 vols., 1965), I, 313-367.

[34]A.J.R. Russell-Wood, Fidalgos and Philanthropists (Berkeley, 1968), ch. 8, pp. 173-200.

[35]For reports on the state of the economy at mid-century, see Aspectos, Pinto de Aguiar, ed., pp. 54-63; Wenceslau Pereira da Silva, "Parecer . . . 1738," ABNRJ, XXXI (1913), 27-31; APB, Ordens régias, XXXIX, doc. 7, 47 (March 4, 1743; September 30, 1743), cited in Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, p. 69. The census of 1749 records the lamentable conditions in Santo Amaro and other sugar-producing parishes of the Recôncavo, ABNRJ, XXXI (1913), 201-203.

Beginning in the latter 1730's the influx of novitiates into the Desterro rose sharply and did not taper off until the late 1750's. (Figure V) What this implies -- in keepigg with Malthusian theory -- is that certain negative checks, such as a decline in the marriage rate, exist to curtail population growth in time of economic stress. Recent research in economics clearly reinforces his argument.[36] Furthermore, the rise in numbers of religious evidenced in the Desterro is not simply a replacement phenomenon, as the greater entries did not coincide with an increasing number of deaths. (Figure V)

The exact causes of Bahia's mid-century economic decline remain somewhat elusive, as the alleged crisis is not reflected by a simultaneously definitive fall in sugar prices on the international market.[37] It is therefore likely that these setbacks were due to local conditions. According to contemporary accounts, the limping Bahian economy experienced its worst reversals in the period following the late 1730's. Difficulties continued well into the 1760's. Prior to these critical decades, the sugar sector had suffered fitfully from years of bad harvests, largely the result of inclement weather. In the 1720's the captain-general described the urgency of the situation to the crown.[38] A decade later the troubles allegedly stemmed

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[36]Thomas R. Malthus, An Essay on the Principle of Population (Illinois, 1963), ch. 2, 6-12; cf., Morris Silver, "Births, Marriages and Business Cycles in the United States," Journal of Political Economy (June, 1965), 237-255. I am grateful to Arleen S. Leibowitz, Dept. of Economics, Brown University, for this reference.

[37]N. W. Posthumus, Inquiry into the History of Prices in Holland (2 vols., Leiden, 1964), II, 272-283; 369-376.

[38]APB, Ordens régias, XXIII, doc. 124 (October 5, 1728); XXV, doc. 6, 6A (April 29, 1729; August 25, 1729); doc. 19, 19A (May 9, 1729; August 28, 1729). A shortage of currency compounded by a decline in tobacco sales aggravated local conditions.

from a decline in the volume of sugar sold, as opposed to a definitive drop in the market price.[39] At the same time that competition from the mining regions for imports -- slaves in particular -- raised internal prices, sugar prices on the international market in the late 1730's, early 1740's and 1750's climbed and fell sporadically. In the 1750's the once prosperous sugar parishes of the Bahian Recôncavo were depleted of their former population and described as stagnating.[40] By the late 1760's the convents, third orders and individuals lending money were reputedly taking advantage of a desperate situation and foreclosing upon rural properties.[41]

The rise in professants may be explained by a number of factors related to the unstable economy. For the planter, the struggle to maintain social status in the face of economic insecurity and potential downward mobility forced him to commit unendowed daughters to the convent. Simultaneously, the admission of greater numbers of women from socially acceptable familiesfamiliale families was due, perhaps in part, to a decline in the nunnery's income. As the convent's earnings were largely predicated upon the payment of interest on loans by the planter sector, any economic setback to the indebted millowners had immediate consequences for the nunnery. In 1756 the Desterro had accumulated a total of 33,436,077 <u>reis</u> in unpaid loans.[42] When capital borrowed

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[39]Pinto de Aguiar, ed. <u>Aspectos</u>, pp. 54-63; Posthumus, <u>Inquiry</u>, II, 272-283; 369-376.

[40]ABNRJ, XXXI (1913), 201-203.

[41]Pinto de Aguiar, ed. <u>Aspectos</u>, pp. 68-69

[42]AHU, Bahia, Ppp. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6554-6555.

by the sugar growers became increasingly difficult to collect, the convent readily accepted the daughters of wealthy merchants in order to improve its finances. For example, the daughter of José da Cunha Reis was admitted in 1741 with the proviso that she furnish more than the stipulated dowry "because of the lack of money for construction of the convent."[43] The same was true for the wealthy engineer Manuel Antunes Lima, who likewise promised many times the required endowment.[44]

The royal ban on the passage of women to Portugal, issued in 1732, did not contribute in any significant degree to the rising pressure for places in the Destêrro. The erection of three additional convents in Salvador within the ten years following the prohibition absorbed some women who might otherwise have professed on the continent. Furthermore, despite the crown's legislation, the transatlantic flow of women to Portuguese houses persisted, as women obtained royal licenses to sail for the metropolis. Lastly, a concomitant rise in the numbers of brothers of higher standing accepted by the Misericórdia -- accepted at a time when the finances of the Brotherhood were also deteriorating -- likewise reinforces the notion that economic dislocation was responsible for the changes in the admissions policies of

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[43]For José da Cunha Reis, see APB, Notas de escrituras, LXXI, fols. 183-185.

[44]The records of Manuel Antunes Lima's transactions are located in APB, Notas, LXII, fols. 230-232; LXIV, fols. 344-345. Another means of generating income, the practice of taking in supernumerary nuns, was common among the nunneries of the middle ages. See Snape, English Monastic Finances, pp. 149-152.

both institutions.[45]

Economic Function

Aside from the social gains, there were economic advantages to having a daughter take the veil. In place of an extravagant marriage portion, a father had only to furnish the more modest conventual dowry. Endowments of religious served the three-fold purpose of providing support for the nun, freeing her from material concerns for her welfare and giving the nunnery a reliable source of income.[46]

By comparison to the marriage portions of the Misericórdia, the dotes of other convents, wage levels and property values, the Destêrro's dowry was a substantial sum. The royal license issued July 6, 1665 set the monetary value of the endowment at 600,000 reis. By 1718, the requirement had been raised to 1,000,000 reis. In stark contrast, marriage dowries funded by the Misericórdia ranged from 50,000 to 100,000 reis. Moreover, none of Bahia's other convents required what in effect constituted the Destêrro's admission fee.[47]

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[45]On the founding, building and dowry requirements of the convents licensed in the 1730's, see AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 128, 383-384, 499-500, 1134-1135, 1215-1216, 1609-1610, 2010, 2184-2185, 2187-2188. Evidence of the continued passage of women to the peninsula may be found in APB, Ordens régias, LXXIII, docs. 35, 57; LIII, fols. 167-172; LXXVI, doc. 77, fols. 175; XXXVII, doc. 21, fols. 67-67v. See also AN, Cod. 952, XXVI, fol. 398; XXIX, fols. 158; XXXI, fols. 159; XXXII, fol. 308; XXXIII, fol. 241; XXXV, fol. 117; XXXVII, fol. 286; XXXXI, fol. 48.

[46]Rev. Thomas M. Kealy, Dowry of Women Religious. (Published PhD. dissertation, Canon Law, Catholic University, 1941), pp. 1-25.

[47]AHU, Bahia Pap. avul., 1ª sér. cat., 6554-6555; ASCD, Livro da fundação, fols. 2-2v, 3-4v; On the Misericórdia's dowries, see Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, ch. 8, 173-200; Annual rentals of urban property around mid-century might vary from 2,000 reis for a small piece (2-3 braças) of land in 1758 to 25,000 reis required for a substantial house. See ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 44, 48. A lawyer for the Misericórdia in 1750 earned 100,000 to 130,000 reis. Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, p. 380; Kealy, Dowry, pp. 29-32.

The dowry appears to have been paid in two ways. First, those who could afford it supplied the stipulated amount outright. Alternatively, a father who was unable to provide the dowry in a lump sum assumed a lien on his property and obligated himself, his heirs and any future owners of the estate for the restitution of the debt. The convent thus received an annual income equivalent at a minimum to the established interest rate and was guaranteed the payment of a dowry over a period of years.[48] Such a system worked to the advantage of landowners, who although short of cash could use their holdings to provide the collateral required.

A second benefit derived from placing a child in the convent was that it facilitated access to credit. Like the Misericórdia, and a number of brotherhoods and religious orders, the Desterro operated as a lending institution. For parents and relatives of the nuns, loans were easier to secure and neither collateral nor guarantors of the loan were rigorously required. A debtors roll of 1704 lists ten of 80 debtors who were parents of nuns. In one case, the convent's attorney, José Pires de Carvalho, reported to the abbess that he had been approached by an influential friend who sought a loan without having to draw up the legally required contract.[49]

Generous terms for repayment of loans, such as exemption

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[48]I have seen no evidence of liens set up in perpetuity as occurred in the Mexican situation. See Asunción Lavrin, "The Feminine Orders in Colonial Mexico," (Paper delivered at the American Historical Association Meeting, New Orleans, December, 1972), pp. 14-16; ASCD, Cxa. 1, Juros dos dotes, Pastas 2(II), 32; Cxa. 2, Pasta 62;

[49]AHU, Bahia, pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 9885 (December 1, 1778); ASCD, Cxa.1, José Pires de Carvalho to Abbess, Pasta 3; Cxa. 2, Lista dos devedores, Pasta 72.

from interest for a period of time, or the acceptance of reimbursement in kind rather than in specie, were arranged for those with relations in the convent. Furthermore, defaulting parents of nuns were frequently not brought to justice. Rodrigo da Costa de Almeida, provedor da alfândega (purveyor of customs), whose three sisters had taken the veil, settled his deceased father's debt only after being sued by the convent in 1766. Twelve years later, he was again defaulting on another obligation.[50] The practice of such favoritism was not without its purpose, as it was the convent that ultimately stood to gain by even a small legacy from a nun or her family.

The Destêrro Convent, as a repository for the women of Salvador's elite, served more than a religious function. As an ecclesiastical institution, it offered the monastic vocation to females who desired it. Beyond that, the nunnery received women for more mundane reasons. Primary among the motives for secluding a daughter in the Destêrro was the family's incapacity to endow her for marriage. Among the Bahian gentry, restriction of marriages enabled a family to concentrate its inheritance and to prevent its diminution by division among a number of heirs. In freeing a father from the financial burdens of providing a marriage portion, and offering him a respectable alternative for his celibate daughters, the Destêrro contributed to the maintenance of a low rate of marriage among portions of the populace. Ultimately, then, the nunnery acted to reinforce class lines and to buttress the exclusivity of the Bahian elite.

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[50]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 20, 35; Cxa. 2, Pastas 63(I), 70(I).

IV WOMEN AND NUNS IN COLONIAL BAHIA

Good Sirs, since I was twelve, some
years ago
Thanks be to God that I am still
alive
Of husbands at the Church-door
I've had five

-- Chaucer, Canterbury Tales,
Wife of Bath's prologue.

Women and Nuns: the ideal and the actual

According to the traditional view, the woman of the Portuguese colony was consigned to a life of seclusion, inactivity, and ignorance. She is supposed to have left the home only three times in her life: to be baptised, married and buried.[1] Male vigilance confined her to the interior of the house, forbade her participation in dinner conversation, and prevented her appearance in the presence of male visitors. If she went out, it was for Mass or a religious fest, and she did so, totally hidden from view in a heavily curtained sedan chair. In spite of the sanctity of such occasions, one church authority still complained of the paucity of women attending services. The archbishop of Bahia in 1751 wrote the King lamenting that white women were not the only females restricted to their homes, as mulattas and pardas also strove to imitate this behavior.[2]

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[1] Fernando Castelo Branco, Lisboa seiscentista (Lisbon, 1957), pp. 232-234; Also quoted in Charles Boxer, The Golden Age of Brazil: Growing Pains of a Colonial Society (Berkeley, 1964), p. 134, and in A.J.R. Russell-Wood, Fidalgos and Philanthropists (Berkeley, 1968), p. 320.

[2] AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 128 (July 20, 1751).

Behind this zealous seclusion lay the male conviction that exposure of a wife or daughter was a certain prelude to adultery or defloration. Travelers reported that men in Brazil dealt out cruel punishment for the loss of feminine virtue. They recorded the ease with which a husband could murder an adulterous wife to avenge his honor, A more humane father, after attempting a marriage, might only expel a defiled daughter from his home. In the event that these solutions were viewed as reckless, the adulterous (or unwanted) wife or the disgraced daughter could be committed to a convent.[3] One mother, whose daughter had been kidnaped and ravished by a traitorous friend of the family, petitioned the King

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[3]For the impressions of foreign travelers, see F. Froger, Rélation d'un voyage fait en 1695, 1696 and 1698 (Amsterdam, 1699), pp. 142-143; Anonymous, Journal d'un voyage sur les cotes d'Afrique et aux Indes d'Espagne . . . (Amsterdam, 1730), p. 242; Mr. Dellon, Voyages de Mr. Dellon avec sa rélation de l'Inquisition . . . (3 vols., Cologne, 1709-1711), II, 190-196; M. Frezier, Rélation du voyage de la mer du Sud aux cotes du Chily et du Perou . . . (Paris, 1732), p. 277; Le Gentil de la Barbinais, Nouveau voyage autour du monde . . . (3 vols., Paris, 1728-1729), III, 203-212; Mrs. Kindersley, Letters from the Island of Teneriffe, Brazil, the Cape of Good Hope and the East Indies (London, 1777), pp. 31, 39-40, 41-43; Thomas Lindley, Narrative of a Voyage to Brazil . . . (London, 1805), pp. 102, 110-112, 271-272, 274-275; L. F. de Tollenare, Notas dominicais tomadas durante uma viagem em Portugal e no Brasil . . . (Salvador, 1956), pp. 322-323, 332-333; Maria Graham, Journal of a Voyage to Brazil and Residence There (London, 1824), pp. 131-133, 138-139. For the contemporary Luso-Brazilian's view, see in particular, José da Silva Lisboa, "Carta para o Dr. Domingos Vandelli em que lhe dá notícia desenvolvida sobre a Bahia . . .," ABNRJ, XXXII (1914), 505; Luis dos Santos Vilhena, A Bahia no século XVIII (3 vols., Salvador, 1969), I, 54-55; Jcão Rodrigues de Brito, A economia brasileira no alvorecer do século XIX (Salvador, N.D.), pp. 99-101. Among modern authors, see Gilberto Freyre, The Masters and the Slaves (New York, 1966), pp. 351-354; Charles Boxer, Portuguese Society in the Tropics: The Municipal Councils of Goa, Macao, Bahia and Luanda, 1510-1800 (Madison, 1965), pp. 92-94, 145, 173; Salvador de Sá and the Struggle for Brazil and Angola, 1602-1680 (London, 1952), pp. 97-98, 150, 198-199, and The Golden Age, pp. 137-138, 253-254, by the same author; Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, pp. 171, 176-181, 183-184, 187, 194, 311, 320-322, 329.

to have her child accommodated in a nunnery at the expense of the offending male.[4]

While female chastity was prized above all feminine qualities, by contrast, promiscuity and sexual prowess were expected of the male. In all his relations with women -- sexual and social, inside the home and out -- he ruled with the certainty of an autocrat.[5] Thomas Lindley, who constantly reminds us of his own bias when he speaks of the "weaker sex", himself remarked upon the noticeable scorn for women that dominated every occasion.[6] Acceptance of such a dichotomy of roles would lead us to conclude that the woman of the colonies was intimidated, degraded and reduced to a state of abject ignorance. Years of passivity and the burdens of child-bearing, took their toll in the early loss of youth, neurotic ailments, and a general debility so frequently observed by contemporaries and travelers.[7] One historian suggested the analogy of a slave. Dominated first by her father, then

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[4]APB, Ordens régias, XVIIC, fol. 9, N.D.

[5]The classic portrayal of the Brazilian family is that of Capistrano de Abreu: "taciturn father, a submissive wife, and terrified children," quoted in Perspectives on Brazilian History, ed. E. Bradford Burns (Berkeley, 1967), p. 174. For comparative purposes, see Rogelio Díaz-Guerrero's psychological analysis of the Mexican family,,"Neurosis and the Psychological Structure of the Mexican Family," American Journal of Psychiatry, 112 (December, 1955), 411-414.

[6]Lindley, Narrative, p. 103.

[7]Mrs. Kindersley, Letters, p. 42; Rodrigues de Brito, A economia, 101. See also, Gilberto Freyre, Masters, pp. 360-361; Robert Southey, History of Brazil (3 vols., London, 1817-1819), III, 833, 847-848, citing John Mawe.

by her husband, the Luso-Brazilian woman was physically and emotionally drained by a life of isolation, melancholy and sullen obedience.[8] The overprotection, isolation and dependence of the female is epitomized by the use of the sedan chair. Borne on the backs of slaves and spared the sight or glance of the vulgar, the upper-class Luso-Brazilian woman was hermetically sealed from contact with life itself.

In the conventional view the nun was far more oppressed. Her existence conjured up no less than the image of incarceration, or even that of being buried alive. Mrs. Kindersley, an Englishwoman with an unabashed anti-Catholic bias, portrays for her readers a nun who is "the very picture of sorrow."[9] Folk quatrains in more recent times similarly lament the wasted youth, the loneliness and despair of the young woman forced to take the veil:

> Against my will did I profess
> Because my father wished it
> I am dead though still alive
> Shrouded in sackcloth.[10]

This stereotype of the passive, pure and cloistered Luso-Brazilian woman most probably represents ideal, rather than attainable behavior. The extent of aberration from the norm might be expected to differ in accordance with such variables as social position, region, and time. Among the lower classes, the preservation of virginity or the safeguarding

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[8]Carl N. Degler, Neither Black Nor White, Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States (New York, 1971), pp. 232-234.

[9]Mrs. Kindersley, Letters, pp. 39-40; See also, Lindley, Narrative, pp. 142-143.

[10]Francisco Augusto Pereira da Costa, "Folklore pernambucano," Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro (RIHGB), 116:70[2] (1907), 375-376.

of young women is said not to be a major concern. In colonial times also poverty was probably the great leveller of the sexes and economic necessity required that each family member -- whether male or female -- contribute to the sustenance of all.[11] In the urban society of Salvador, women shared certain occupations with men. Not uncommonly, married or widowed females acted as vendors, shopkeepers and peddlers. While they frequently sold goods directly from their homes, they were also known to have operated bakeries, confectionery shops, and stores specializing in imported goods. Certain women acquired skills for which they became widely recognized. In the opinion of one reliable resident, the daughters of João Ladislau were better pharmacists than most licensed apothecaries.[12] Moreover, by the late eighteenth century, widows of merchants petitioned the Junta do Comércio (Board of Trade) for the right to carry on their deceased husbands' business activities. The Lisbon Almanach's 1807 edition places a number of widows in its roster of Bahian merchants.[13] In spite of a system of values which heralded female confinement, women nonetheless appeared prominently in urban commercial life.

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[11]See Emilio Willems, "The Structure of the Brazilian Family," Social Forces, 31:4 (May, 1953), 339-346, and "On the Portuguese Family Structure," International Journal of Comparative Sociology, 3:1 (1962), 65-79. See also, Joyce Riegelhaupt, "Saloio Women: An Analysis of Informal and Formal Political and Economic Roles of Portuguese Peasant Women," Anthropological Quarterly, 40:3 (July, 1967), 109-126. One could argue that given the machismo of the upper class male, and the chastity of the female, a stress on lower class feminine chastity would be socially dysfunctional.

[12]DHAMB, Atas da Câmara (6 vols., Salvador, 1949[?] -1955[?]), II, 107, 154, 388-392; Thales de Azevedo, Povoamento da cidade do Salvador (São Paulo, 1955); pp. 442-444; Rodrigues de Brito, A Economia, pp. 102-103.

[13]This information was very kindly made available to me by Catherine Lugar, whose dissertation studies "The Mercantile Community of Salvador, 1780-1830." (March 9, 1973).

Feminine chastity, like justice on the bench, was also an ideal much revered but not always upheld.[14] Tales by travelers of their personal exploits -- admittedly, of questionable veracity -- at times cast doubt on the much vaunted purity of the Brazilian female.[15] That critical observer, Mrs. Kindersley, thought she detected an acquired cunning and a spirit of intrigue among women.[16] Even the fact that the eighteenth-century church code explicitly suggested ways of dealing with adulterous wives and licentious women implies that the circumstance could not have been extraordinary. The prelate-author counseled that married women were to be admonished privately so as not to imperil their lives by exposing their error to their husbands.[17] Since behavior usually differs among the social classes Monteiro da Vide's instructions may have been intended for the mass of Bahia's inhabitants and not the upper sectors. One eighteenth-century writer in fact defended the honor of elite women against the unfounded allegations of foreigners.[18]

Apart from questions of sexuality, practical concerns dictated the necessity of some degree of female activity.

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[14]The analogy is taken from Emily James Putnam, The Lady: Studies of Certain Significant Phases of Her History (1910; rpt., Chicago, 1970), p. 104.

[15]Francisco Pyrard de Laval, A viagem de Francisco Pyrard de Laval, annot. Joaquim Heliodoro da Cunha Rivara, (2 vols., 1679; rpt; Porto, 1858), II, 237-238; Frezier, Rélation, p. 275.

[16]Kindersley, Letters, p. 41.

[17]Sebastião Monteiro da Vide, Constituições primeiras do Arcebispado da Bahia feitas, e ordenadas pelo Illustrissimo e Reverendissimo Senhor (1707; rpt., Lisbon, 1765), pp. 367-368.

[18]Santos Vilhena, A Bahia, I, 54-55.

Although patterns of upper class behavior probably conform most closely to the ideal construct, conditions of life in the colony made divergence from it inevitable. High rates of mortality, the age disparity between marital partners, and the slowness of transportation meant that the administration of an estate was often left in the hands of a woman faced with the death or absence of a family member. The numbers of females appearing as owners of engenhos and sugar lands in the Bahian Recôncavo in various colonial records indicates that this occurred fairly frequently. On the Jesuit-owned engenho Sergipe do Conde more than 7 percent of its lavradores over the period 1611-1711 were women. Moreover, a 1755 compilation of engenhos in the region lists 16 of a total of 172 (9 percent) owned by women.[19] Women also figured as owners of extensive cattle lands.

Widowhood accounts for most such examples. Antônia de Menezes, widow of Bernardino Cavalcante de Albuquerque and mother of a nun in the Destêrro, was cited by a royal survey of Recôncavo parishes in 1757 as the administrator of a holding with 130 inhabitants.[20] It has been suggested that such women, attractive for their wealth, tended to remarry quickly.[21] However, the financial position of the

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[19]For information on the formidable Jesuit mill, see Stuart B. Schwartz, "Free Labor in a Slave Economy: The Lavradores de Cana of Colonial Bahia," Colonial Roots of Modern Brazil, ed. Dauril Alden (Berkeley, 1973), pp. 178-179. A listing of millowners is found in José Antônio Caldas, Notícia geral de tôda esta capitania da Bahia (ed. facsim., Salvador, 1951), pp. 429-438.

[20]ABNRJ, XXXI (1913), 211. See also Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, p. 184, for the description of a financially independent woman. Maria Lopes Oleira was separated from her husband and, using her maiden name, she supported herself from the earnings of a manioc farm

[21]Schwartz, "Free Labor," p. 178. See also, James Lockhart, Spanish Peru, 1532-1560 (Wisconsin, 1968), pp. 157-159.

widow was not always favorable, and it is likewise conceivable that prominent widows sought rapid nuptials to rid themselves of their obligations. Widowhood could confer not only the title and privileges of an inherited estate, but also the debts of the deceased. The records of the Desterro Convent attest to the numerous instances of widows saddled with the burdens of overdue loans and foreclosed plantations. In a list of loans from the years 1704-1707, of approximately 80 borrowers, 15 were women. According to the known frequency of their landownership (7 to 9 percent), women therefore appear to be overrepresented among the debtors. Included among them was the widow of the socially preeminent João Peixoto Viegas. A typical case is that of Tereza Eugenia de Menezes, owner of two engenhos inherited through the deaths of her husband and father. Faced with imminent forfeiture by the convent, she pleaded in her letters for a moratorium on her loan and promised repayment with sugar from her next harvest.[22]

Women also came into possession of large estates through inheritance. Sometimes there was no male heir and sometimes inheritance was limited to females. The vast land empire of the Casa da Torre passed to Garcia D'Avila's sister's daughter at his death in 1805. D. Ursula Luisa Montserrat likewise became the single heiress of her father, the renowned "bandeirante baiano," Pedro Barbosa Leal. With her princely

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[22]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 2(II), 19(II), 21, 28, 29, 30. For the case of Eugenia de Menezes, see Cxa. 1, Pastas 19(II), 29. The list of debtors may be located in Cxa. 2, Pasta 72. José Wanderley Pinho, História de um engenho do Recôncavo (Rio de Janeiro, 1946), pp. 58-60, records that Luis Paes Florião's widow was forced because of her indebtedness to sell her engenho of Matoim to the powerful sugar lord, Antônio da Rocha Pitta.

legacy, she founded the Convent of Mercês in 1738.[23]

If the activities of some women challenge the stereotypical notion of accepted female behavior, those of the nun, a figure at the fringes of secular society, do likewise. Once again the ideal and the actual are at variance. In theory, taking the veil meant renunciation of the secular world, avowal of self-abnegation, acceptance of a communal rule of strict discipline, and dedication to the service of God. Every aspect of a nun's existence -- from behavior to dress -- was strictly prescribed and routinized. Daily ritual centered on the canonical hours, times established by ecclesiastical law for prayer and meditation. Silence and fasting were requisites; hours and even subjects for conversation were determined by the rules of the order.[24] Finally, as a convent subject to the rule of the ordinary, all activities of the nuns were under the supervision of the archbishop.[25]

Archepiscopal permission was required for individual as well as conventual matters. No occupant could enter or leave the convent, dispose of property, possess a slave, or enjoy any exemptions from the communal rule without license

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[23]See Pedro Calmon, História da Casa da Torre (Rio de Janeiro, 1939), pp. 126-136; Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, pp. 180-183, suggests that matrilineal inheritance was a practice adopted to avoid "spurious claimants." His usage of the term is, however, questionable. See Inácio Accioli de Cerqueira e Silva, Memórias históricas e políticas da Bahia (6 vols., Bahia, 1919-1940), V, 506-507, for mention of D. Ursula Luisa Montserrat. For the example of a woman divesting herself of the possession of a bureaucratic office, see APCHB (5 vols., Salvador, 1950-1951), II, no. 4039.

[24]ASCD, Religiosas do Convento de Santa Clara do Destêrro. Segunda regra concedida pelo Summo Pontifice Urbano Quarto, 1726.

[25]Livro da fundação, fol. 3-4v.

from the archbishop. Similarly, the order's statutes required that the prelate not only be responsible for the spiritual condition of the nunnery, but also that he be consulted before alienating or purchasing conventual property, and that he review the nuns' finances quarterly. Moreover, without the consent of the ordinary, church officials were forbidden to teach women to read, write, or even sing.[26]

Such regulations were formulated from two basic considerations. The first was a traditional ecclesiastical view that houses of nuns, unlike those of monks, were incapable of managing their affairs independently.[27] Second was the aim of facilitating the nun in her renunciation of the secular and to allow her to concentrate her thoughts and activities on the divine. In fact, for many women confinement in the nunnery was not necessarily a life of pious restraint and self denial. As perhaps the one respectable alternative for unmarried upper-class females in a male-centered society, the life of a nun could foster individual initiative, independence, and self-fulfillment in non-religious spheres.

What portion of the eighteenth-century nun's life was spent devoted to her religious vocation? Professions were permitted at the age of sixteen providing that the aspirant had passed her required year in the novitiate. Did most women then enter when they reached the age of fifteen? This, in fact,

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[26]Sebastião Monteiro da Vide, Constituições, pp. 198, 244-247..

[27]Kealy, Dowry of Women Religious (Published Ph.D. dissertation, Canon Law, Catholic University, 1941), pp. 90-92; James Edward McManus, 'The Administration of Temporal Goods in Religious Institutes' (Published Ph.D. dissertation, Canon Law, Catholic University, 1937), pp. 66-67, 96-97.

does not seem to have been the case. Only in the seventeenth century did women frequently enter by age fifteen as educandas. In the next century the average age of admission appears to have been around eighteen. Why the change following the early eighteenth century? There are few clues which provide answers. From the beginning to the end of the century the nunnery served primarily the unmarried daughters of Bahia's elite. Does this, then, imply that the age of marriage was rising? Perhaps so, since available evidence suggests that women contracted unions earlier in the sixteenth century than they did in the eighteenth.[28]

Information on the nuns' age at death is more conclusive. The religious of the Desterro apparently enjoyed long lifespans (even by present-day measures). The archbishop calculated that a nun would live forty years beyond her age at entrance. Indeed, the nunnery's records indicate that the average age at death was sixty-seven and that occasionally a religious might even live to see her ninetieth year.[29] Since the strongest threat to the life of the female stemmed from child-birth and pestilence, nuns, spared entirely from the first, and at least partially from the second, probably outlived most of their feminine contemporaries. The ill were isolated in the infirmary, where they received a special cure consisting of

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[28]Freyre, Masters, pp. 363-364, citing the records of the Inquisition; Carlos Ott, Formação étnica da cidade do Salvador (2 vols., Salvador, 1955-1957), I, 184; AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 8813, 8840; Supra., ch. 3.

[29]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 2010. Dates and ages at death are entered in the Livro das entradas. The sample is based on the age at death for 132 nuns.

a diet of chicken, and a treatment of medicinal herbs and bleedings.[30] Data on the lifespan of the upper class women of Brazil is as yet unavailable. However, information regarding the religious in the United States today, similarly indicates that their life expectancy exceeds that of secular women.[31]

Convent Life

Life in the convent could offer a range of experiences beyond the sacred. For the nun in the Destêrro the rigors of conventual discipline and ritual were mitigated by a series of circumstances. Since the convent served as a repository for a closely knit add intermarried social elite, a nun -- rather than being isolated from -- was surrounded by her friends and family. It was common for a religious of the black veil to have not only sisters, but cousins, aunts and possibly her mother in the cloister. (Figure III) Even the slaves of her father's household could accompany a girl into the convent. The pppal bull founding the convent set the number of communal servants at fifteen. However, throughout most of the eighteenth century each nun had at least two for her personal use. In 1764 the church chronicler, Jaboatão, reported that the nunnery had 94 nuns of the black veil and 219 personal servants.[32]

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[30]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pastas 47(I)-47(VI) (1751-1792).

[31]The median age at death of American nuns today is seventy-seven. Cited in R. Trexler, "Le célibat à la fin du Moyen Age," Annales, 6 (November-December, 1972), 1329-1350.

[32]ASCD, Livro da fundação, fols. 3-4v; Cxa. 1, Pastas 6-18(III); Jaboatão, Novo orbe seráfico brasilico ou chronica das frades menores da Provincia do Brasil (5 vols., Rio de Janeiro, 1861), III, 668.

Since the religious were forbidden to leave the cloister, and their communication with the outside was limited to supervised sessions at the grilles, servants were used to carry illicit messages in and out of the Destêrro.

Indeed, life as a Poor Clare was not one of deprivation, if we may judge by the menus and the entertainments. The convent's standard fare, or at least that purchased regularly by the provisoura (provisioner), was farinha, rice, bacon, pork and kale. Fridays, fish was substituted for meat. These provisions fed the servants, slaves, secular inhabitants and the nuns.[33] The practices of fasting and maintaining silence, if enforced, were compensated by sumptuous feasts on saints' days and diversions such as plays and concerts. On feast days and for an archbishop's visits elaborate banquets of several courses and many varieties of sweets, dumplings and cakes were served.[34] Holidays prompted the presentation of liturgical recitals in addition to musical and dramatic exhibitions of spirited character.[35]

Coercion may have been employed in placing many a daughter in the nunnery. But the choice of a marriage partner was no less autocratic. The convent, in fact, may have been less confining than the home and may even have offered a measure of freedom to its inhabitants. One Portuguese chronicle

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[33]For the conventual expenses on provisions, see ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pastas 47(I)-47(VI). The visita of 1764 recorded that the nuns refused to dine communally. See AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6556.

[34]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pastas 47(I)-47(VI).

[35]Le Gentil de La Barbinais, Nouveau, pp. 206-209.

records the statement of a girl who took the veil only after being convinced she would enjoy greater personal liberty in the cloister than in the secular world. On entering the novitiate, she stated "I did not want [to profess], but N . . .[a nun] told me that inside here it was better than outside, because there is more freedom."[36]

If few women consciously chose to enter the convent seeking an unfettered existence, many refused to abide by the rules of the community. The sacred vows of poverty, chastity and obedience seem frequently to have been substituted by the motto of Chaucer's prioress, "love conquers all."[37] Although the rule of poverty can be interpreted with a degree of relativity as a norm established by the individual community, such logic is not applicable (for obvious reasons) to the vows of chastity. By almost any standards the behavior of the Destêrro's nuns was extreme. In fact, the illicit romances of the Clarissas became such public notice that they moved the Bahian satirist, to dedicate a few lines to the community.[38]

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[36]Castelo-Branco, Lisboa, p. 218, quoting from a monastic chronicle from the Convent of Jesus de Setubal, Arquivo Nacional do Torre de Tombo, Cod. 846, fol. 100v.

[37]Emily James Putnam, The Lady: Studies of Certain Significant Phases of Her History (Chicago, 1970), p. 104, quoting Geoffrey Chaucer, "Prologue to the Canterbury Tales."

[38]Obras completas (6 vols., São Paulo, 1945), I, 237.

Madre Abadessa, sacristã, porteiras
Discretas do Mosteiro e mais canalha
Que estando já metidas na baralha
Quereis inda sugar como terceiras
Soberbas anciãs lascivas freiras
. . .
Mother abbess, sacristan, door-keepers
Discreet nuns and other rabble
Already bent upon games of disorder
Still wanting to act like seculars
Arrogant grand dames, lascivious nuns

However, the amorous behavior of the religious occasioned more than poetry. Virtually every decade witnessed a round of royal rebukes and renewed efforts at reform of the Destêrro. The activities of the nuns were the subject of royal correspondence at least 12 times between 1690 and 1790.[39] Monks and their fellow churchmen were generally the objects of the nuns' affections. Gregório de Matos gleefully described the presence of large numbers of clerics flocking to the gates of the Destêrro ostensibly for hand-outs of sweets made by the nuns. Gilberto Freyre goes one step further to note the sensuality of the names bestowed upon these confections: "little kisses," "maiden's tongue," "love's caresses," "angel's tidbits," "nun's belly" and "married couples."[40] Although baking delicacies may have been an innocent conventual pursuit, certain incidents achieved great notoriety. At one time, a girl had an affair with the convent's chaplain who entered the dormitory through a trap door of the church.[41] Such periodic scandals notwithstanding, not a single girl was expelled from the cloister; nor did Bahia's leading families become discouraged from admitting their offspring.

Most nuns, however, could find avenues of satisfaction in the conventional activities of religious life. The convent had one distinct advantage over matrimony in that it permitted

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[39] See also, Accioli-Amaral, Memórias, V, 488-495; II, 58; DHBNRJ, LXXXIX (1950), 186-187; XCV (1952), 245-247, 449; Santos Vilhena, A Bahia, II, 466-468; APB, Ordens régias, I, doc. 70; XVII, doc. 55A; ABNRJ, XXXII (1914), 438; ASCD, Cxa. 1, pastas 29, 34, 39, 40.

[40] Freyre, Masters, pp. 259-260.

[41] APB, Ordens régias, XXXIV, doc. 97ff., Fls. 327-328.

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women to exercise a maternal role without having to tolerate a disagreeable husband. Educandas (secular entrants under the tutelage of the convent from the ages of seven to twenty-five), impoverished white female servants and even infants were placed in the care of certain nuns. At age six, when Ursula of the Virgins petitioned to be made an educanda in 1740, she had been living in the convent for four years in the company of two aunts, both nuns.[42]

Moreover, the convent served as the sole source of feminine education outside the home. In a society where most men were illiterate, female instruction was neglected, if not considered plainly inappropriate. Travelers have commented particularly on the low level of the culture of the women in Brazil.[43] The abbess of one Bahian nunnery, in arguing for the education of women, wrote to the King, lamenting that "ignorance is the most pervasive among young women, as we [ourselves] experienced in our fathers' homes."[44] Indeed, one proverb perhaps most aptly summarizes the expectation of the female's intellectual horizons: "a woman is well enough educated when she can read correctly her prayers and can write her recipe for goiabada."[45]

For the nun who had been placed in the convent as an educanda at an early age, there were compensations in the

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[42] ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 16(II).

[43] Le Gentil de La Barbinais, Nouveau, pp. 208-209; Frezier, Rélation, p. 279; Kindersley, Letters, pp. 41-42; Lindley, Narrative, pp. 151-152.

[44] AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 129-130, Abbess of Ursuline Convent of N.S. da Soledade e Coração de Jesus to King (July 20, 1751).

[45] Cited in Carl Degler, Neither Black Nor White (New York, 1971), p. 234.

skills she acquired. Here a young woman mastered not only the feminine arts of sewing, embroidery, singing, playing musical instruments and baking delicate confections, but she also learned to read, write and work with numbers. Although only a small portion of the female population may have benefitted, the nun attained a level of literacy equivalent and probably superior to the majority of males of her social class. Several nuns had collections of up to twenty spiritual books, while others recorded their activities in personal notebooks.[46]

Furthermore, convent life permitted and possibly even fostered individual pursuits, as well as offered responsibility. The tasks of the principal conventual officers demanded leadership, financial acumen, and managerial talent. The most significant positions, apart from the abbess, were the vigária (second-in-command) and the escrivã (secretary), who recorded all of the convent's expenses. The nun in charge of provisioning (provisoura) and the enfermeira (nurse) likewise exercised weighty functions. The daily necessities of the community were cared for by 25 additional officers. Listed among them are the instructress of novices, the choir-mistress, the wardrobe attendant, and the guarda dos homens (male guard), who probably supervised the convent's male slaves. Apart from the abbess, vigária and secretary who held three-year terms, each of these positions were elective and filled for the space of a year.[47]

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[46]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Inventários, Pastas 60(I-IV). See Appendix IV.

[47]ASCD, Livro das eleições.

It was the abbess who was the spiritual and administrative head of the community. She exercised her domain over both the internal and external affairs of the convent. In daily matters, with the help of the convent officials, she organized expenditures for food, clothing, and repairs, both of the convent and its real estate. She additionally received donations, served as a liaison with the outside and directed the activities of conventual slaves.

More important, as chief executive, she was responsible for the convent's policies as a landlord and money-lender. Three attorneys appointed and salaried by the nuns handled the actual work of tracking down debtors, of collecting rents and of instituting legal proceedings. Moreover, if the community's business warranted it, power of attorney was granted to representatives in the Recôncavo, Rio de Janeiro and Lisbon. All were subordinate to a general solicitor, who operated under the abbess' direction.[48] Although decision-making authority on questions of internal administration rested in the abbess, her handling of conventual property and capital were theoretically subject to the approval and scrutiny of the archbishop. In actual practice, much of the business of the Desterro was conducted without his knowledge or license. The archbishop of Bahia in a letter to the crown argued that the failure to consult the secular church authorities had resulted in an outrageous confusion in the

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[48] See ASCD, Cxa. 4, Segunda regra, fol. 5v; Cxa. 1, Pasta 5(I); Cxa. 2, Pasta 48; See also, APB, Notas, CXVIIA, fols. 262-263; CVL, fols. 190-192; CLX, fols. 136v-137.

Destêrro's accounts.[49]

The administration of loans, rentals, and conventual spending under the auspices of the abbess was indeed pursued with mixed results. The task of enforcing repayment of loans was exceptionally trying. Since the majority of the convent's debtors were drawn from the sugar sector, the nunnery was dependent on the vicissitudes of plantation agriculture. Pleas for moratoria on the payment of loans filled the correspondence to the abbess. The influential status of many conventual debtors similarly impeded collections. In other cases debtors died, and their heirs evaded payment until coerced by the law. A suit against the Casa da Torre, the powerful family of cattle magnates, was still in the courts after forty years of litigation.[50]

Financial losses and administrative confusion reached their peak in the 1770's when the archbishop reclaimed his traditional patriarchal prerogative, and ordered a reform of the Destêrro's accounts.[51] However, mismanagement and disorganization cannot be attributed uniquely to the nunnery. Most colonial institutions, including the municipal council, the royal treasury and the Misericórdia suffered from maladministration. In fact, a surveyor of royal accounts in 1757 wrote that "the world has never seen such a Babel of

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[49] AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 9805, Archbishop to Crown (December 1, 1778).

[50] ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 19, 29, 35. The documents referent to the suit against the Casa da Torre are located in ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 30, 40, and in Cxa. 2, Pastas 53, 59(II).

[51] ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 39, Provision of Archbishop (December 27, 1774). See also, Livro das eleições, fols. 58-58v, 67-67v, 76.

confusion and disorder as among the books, papers and records of the Treasury of Bahia."[52]

The role of the abbess is affirmed by each loan she approved and every court proceeding she initiated. The average nun of the Desterro has left us no such record of her activities. If the religious kept personal diaries, no trace of them survives. The convent of Clarissas, moreover, produced no formidable scholars like Sor Juana of Mexico. However, judging by the inventories of belongings and the precious correspondence that remains, we see that even the nun, presumably the most cloistered of women, was engaged in a score of activities beyond the religious.

Something of the lives of the nuns is revealed in the inventories prepared at their death. Today, fifty-four of these routine tallies remain. (Appendix IV) Each lists the belongings left by the religious, and approximately half give their appraised or sale value. Since the Clarissas were required to divest themselves of property prior to profession, in most cases the deathbed inventory amounted to relatively few personal effects. Chairs, stools, a cot, wardrobe, used clothing, one or two slaves and some baking equipment were the usual objects a nun left behind to testify to her temporal existence.[53]

The wealthy sister had belongs of greater value and

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[52]Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, pp. 114-115. See also, Santos Vilhena, A Bahia, I, 79-80; Dauril Alden, Royal Government in Colonial Brazil (Berkeley, 1968), pp. 279-294.

[53]Most inventories are collected in Cxa. 2, Pastas 60(I-IV). A few appear in Cxa. 1, Pastas 2(II), and in Cxa. 2, 47(III). AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6556 (June 9, 1764).

diversity, which facilitate a partial reconstruction of her lifestyle. In her lifetime, the affluent professant was served by slaves on the finest of imported china. Her meals were cooked with equipment she personally owned. While some slaves were used as personal servants, others were employed in the preparation and sale of sweets and delicacies sold by the individual nun. She inhabited an amply furnished cell whose walls were adorned by the images and pictures of saints. Such extraordinary possessions as precious gems, gold and silver items, candlesticks, fruitbowls, candelabras, and a multitude of statuettes of the holy family were donated to the community for use on sacred occasions during the nun's lifetime.[54] If books formed a part of the nun's belongings, they were usually liturgical in nature. Although a few nuns kept notebooks and others collected spiritual works, such as the lives of the saints, most appear to have limited their literary interests to works of prayer. (Appendix IV)

What survived the nun could be disposed of in a variety of ways. If she died intestate, all her property automatically reverted to the community. Portions of it then might be sold, such as slaves or furniture, to cover the cost of funeral expenses and the saying of masses. In most cases, some time prior to her death a nun apportioned her property in a will. Occasionally, slaves, money or other goods were left to relatives or friends also living within the convent. Items of little worth, such as used clothing, were commonly bequeathed to slaves. Madre Teresa left a legacy of more dubious value

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[54] Marieta Alves, História da veneravel ordem terceira da penitência do Seráfico Pe. São Francisco da Congregação (Salvador, 1948), pp. 137-139, 174.

to her slave -- "a very old cot [donated because of its] disease-ridden quality."[55] A few nuns left unfulfilled financial obligations which were settled by the sale of their remaining possessions. Usually after the settlement of her estate, a portion of the nuns's cash reserves were dedicated to ceremonial masses intoned for her soul.

Among the Clarissas were those who turned their energies to financial dealings. The regulations prohibiting personal possessions did not preclude the nuns receipt of an annual allowance(tença) for their support within the convent. The common method of providing this income was to endow the entrant with a house from whose rental she derived an annual allowance. The amount of the tença is not entirely ascertainable. The municipal council suggested to the King in 1722 that the nuns bring with them an income of 100,000 reis per year, but the proposal may not have been formally enacted. Furthermore, unlike the uniformity of tenças in the other convents -- most of which amounted to 100,000 reis per year -- the receipts for allowances in the Destêrro ranged from 25,000 to 200,000 reis annually.[56]

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[55] ASCD, Inventário da Madre Teresa da Fê, Cxa. 2, Pasta 60(II) February 11, 1759.

[56] DHBNRJ, XCVII (1952), 1990192. For the tenças of Bahia's remaining nunneries, see APB, Notas, LXIV, fols. 350-352; LXV, fols. 23-24; LXXIX, fols. 173-176; LXXX, fols. 61-62; CXXX, fols. 221-222v, CXXXVI, fols. 378v-382, 405v-407; CXXXVII, fols. 267-268v, 271-273; CXLII, 31v-35v, 125v-126v; CXLIV, fols. 224-226, 452-454v; CVL, fols. 132-134, 285-287v; CIVL, fols. 2-4, 15-16v, 17v-18, 130v-132v; CXLVII, fols. 6-7, 249-250v, 254-256, 375v-376, 408-408v; CLV, fols. 129v-131v, 288v-289v, 329-330v. Curiously, notarization of the Destêrro's tenças does not appear in the public record. Information on these allowances was located in ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 29; Cxa. 2, Pastas 48, 59(I), 63(II), 65(I,II). Income was not only drawn from urban real estate, but from the earnings of engenhos as well. See APB, Notas, CXLIV, fols. 224-226; CXLVII, fols. 6-7.

Since at profession a nun renounced her worldly goods, at her death her property, both the principal and its earnings, was incorporated automatically into the patrimony of the convent unless other provisions were made. Nuns therefore could and did prevent their property from falling immediately into ecclesiastical mortmain. This was usually done by willing the proceeds of the estate to a relative within the convent.[57] In other words, while the principal fell to the convent, the interest generated could be paid to the designated heir of the dying nun.[58]

In the nun's lifetime, application of the income depended upon its size and the inclinations of its recipient. While some nuns must have spent the whole of their tenças on food and the necessities of life, others lavished their allowances on costly apparel and luxuries. Still others made donations to the poor or contributed their earnings to masses for dead souls, religious ceremonies and adornments for the community. Indeed, there was considerable pressure upon parents to furnish their daughters with adequate allowances for the sake of maintaining a socially acceptable lifestyle, defined by the extent of donations, the quality of habits, the numbers of slaves held, and the accoutrements of a nun's

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[57] For examples, see APB, Notas, CXLIII, fols. 114-115; ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 37, 46.

[58] ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 63(I); APB, Notas, LXXXIII, fols. 12-17v.

cell.[59]

The freedom to retain the administration, if not the direct ownership, of property gave rise to a number of transactions of sales and purchases among the inhabitants of the convent. A secular inhabitant might sell her holdings to a religious, or vice versa. A nun, Maria dos Prazeres, owned a cattle fazenda leased to Francisco de Albuquerque da Câmara. When he began to backslide in the payment of his rental, she filed suit against him. The upshot was that in order to pay for the costs of the legal proceedings, she sold the farm to D. Antônia do Salvador, a recolhida in the convent.[60] In addition to dealings within the convent the religious sold properties to friends, relatives and any interested parties outside the nunnery as well.[61]

Apart from sales, purchases, and rentals of property, wealthy nuns individually engaged in the business of lending

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[59]The correspondence of Me. Maria de Sta. Rosa de Viterbo reveals that she ordered materials from Lisbon through her attorney on various occasions. See ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 28. (Letters dated January 10, 1736, March 20, 1744 and November 8, 1747). See also, the inventory of Maria Clara de Conceição indicating the purchase of cloth, Cxa. 1, Pasta 47(III) (November 20, 1780). Limited data on the contributions for masses and donations are in ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 45; Cxa. 2, Pasta 59(I); See also Jaboatão, Novo orbe, Book VI, II, 754. The claim that parents were being pauperized in support of their daughters in the Destêrro is found in AHU, Bahia, Pap. Avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6556.

[60]See APB, Notas, CXIV, fols. 66v-68 for the case of Maria dos Prazeres; See also, CXVII, fols. 340v-342; CXLIV, fols. 506-507v.

[61]APB, Notas, CXXII, fols. 176v-177, 238v-240; CXXVII A, fols. 341-341v; CXXVIII, fols. 240v-241v; CXXXVII, fols. 201-202v; CXLIV, fols. 506-507v; CXLVI, fols. 272v-275v; CLIV, fols. 171v-172, 187v-189v. See also, ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 59 (I,II), for evidence of sales of property by the inhabitants of the Destêrro.

money. Over the period of a century at least eleven of the Desterro's professants provided credit to the local populace. Most operated on a small scale, lending whatever capital they may have accrued from their tenças to friends and relatives.[62] Such debts were frequently paid in kind, and the produce, such as sugar, subsequently resold. For example, Madre Leonor Antônio do Salvador received in payment not only several crates of sugar but also a large turkey, four hens, six pigs, one calf and some eggs.[63]

The plentiful correspondence of Madre Antônia de Jesus illustrates well the hazards of money-lending.[64] A childless young widow, she entered the convent in 1684, heiress to a sugar mill, cattle pastures and urban lands. When legal problems delayed the settlement of the estate, she protested bitterly to her procurador (attorney) that she thought her wealth more apparent than real: "Lord knows how I suffer in poverty having the reputation for wealth."[65] In response to her urgent queries, her attorney wrote that he was handling her business as he would his own, but that "these legal dealings are fraught with delays."[66] Once the difficulties were resolved,

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[62]This information is scattered throughout ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 27, 29, 35, 48, and Cxa. 2, 59(I), 61, 63(I).

[63]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Loan of Madre Antônia do Salvador to her brother, Miguel Jerônimo Argolo e Queiros, Pasta 48, October, 1780.

[64]Letters to her attorney, Bento Luis Rosa are collected in ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 19(II). For her inheritance, see her testament, August 23, 1684, ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 2(II), August 23, 1684, and Cxa. 2, Pasta 75.

[65]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Antônia de Jesus to attorney, Pasta 75, n.d.

[66]ASCD, Cxa 1, Attorney to Antônia de Jesus, Pasta 29, n.d.

she donated a significant portion of her inheritance to the construction of the convent's choir.[67] Much of what remained of her capital was placed on loan predominantly to persons engaged in sugar agriculture. Her exchange with her attorney is a narrative of persistent failures to exact payments from debtors. According to her solicitor, collection of debts was routinely impeded by inclement weather, his bouts of illness, shortage of currency and delays in the mills' grinding process. Obligations were met in both cash and kind, although the attorney refused to honor payment in mascovado or lowgrade sugar. If all else failed, the nun filed suit for distraint of debt.[68]

Perhaps the most affluent nun in the Desterro was Madre Catarina de Monte Sinái, a contemporary of Antônia de Jesus. She was the daughter of João de Couros Carneiro, scribe of the municipal council and prominent landowner, and had been placed in the convent in 1696 along with her three sisters. At her death in 1758 she had amassed a considerable fortune based on the ownership of urban real estate, which she leased out, and large sums of money placed on loan. Indeed, when she died, the funds she had recorded as outstanding -- the amount of 4,402,000 reis -- were the equivalent of more than half of the convent's annual income in 1756.[69]

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[67]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Donation of Madre Antônia de Jesus, Pasta 62, n.d; Jaboatão, Novo orbe, III, 66.

[68]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Bento Luis Rosa to Me. Antônia de Jesus, Pasta 19(I), November 21, 1733. For legal proceedings instituted against the widow of a deceased debtor, see the petitions of Antônia deJesus, ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 36,(1733); Cxa. 2, Pasta 53. See also, Petition, December 7, 1736, ASCD, Cxa. 1, Petition, Pasta 35 (December 7, 1736); Cxa. 1, Petition, Pasta 36.

[69]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 6554-6555. The prelate recorded an annual income of 7,735,870 reis for the nunnery. For the inventory and dealings of Catarina de Monte Sinái, see Cxa. 1, Pastas 29, 44, and Cxa. 2, Pastas 48, 60(II), 63(II), 64, 65(I).

By far the greater part of her earnings were derived from the lending of capital. Apparently, she conducted a rather liberal lending policy, counting among her debtors men of humble origins, such as José Rodrigues, a pardo stonemason, and José de Semedo, a free black.[70] Furthermore, she evidently carried on at least a portion of her financial activities independently, and as she herself stated, "without any license from my prelate."[71] Like the convent, she experienced the same difficulty in the collection of loans. Several of the debts are indicated as long overdue or presently in the courts. One beleaguered debtor wrote her that she should not abandon hope of making good his obligation in spite of the fact that "[he] is still in a prison with all of his slaves and possessions attached."[72] Receipt of payment must have been further encumbered by the residence of an occasional debtor as far away as Rio de Janeiro and the mining regions. Although dealing in vast sums of money, her accounts are vague and imprecise. In one case, she noted that she was unaware of the proper name of a deceased debtor. Entries frequently appear in approximate amounts, for example, "600,000 réis more or less."[73]

In addition to capital on loan, the nun's financial empire at her death included six urban and one rural buildings, silver items which she donated to the nunnery, and twelve slaves.

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[70]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Créditos e mais papeis, Pasta 60(II), July 28, 1758.

[71]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Inventário, Pasta 60(II).

[72]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Debtor to Me. Catarina de Monte Sinái, Pasta 28, August 27, 1747.

[73]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Créditos, Pasta 60(II).

Moreover, the industrious nun directed a business, possibly the manufacture and sale of confections in which she apparently employed her slaves as street vendors.[74]

Intended as an institution for the seclusion of women, the nunnery nonetheless provided women with opportunities for independent activity and accomplishment. Was it conventual isolation, elite upbringing or involuntary confinement that produced the female financier? Since the exclusivity of the Desterro restricted its inhabitants to the progeny of a select stratum, its characteristics and activities cannot be generalized to apply to the whole of Brazilian female society. Nevertheless, the close ties maintained between the local elite and the convent, and the continued pressure to introduce its daughters implies that the economic, managerial and possibly even sexual pursuits of the nuns could not have diverged too far from the norm. Much work still remains to be done on marriage patterns, dowries, family size and inheritance practices. However, from an initial probe, it appears that some upper class women -- particularly those in the Desterro Convent -- were neither very cloistered, inactive, nor insignificant.

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[74] ASCD, Cxa. 2, Lista dos escravos, Lista do que achamos na casa, Pasta 60(II).

Plate I. A Christmas Eve concert at the turn of the eighteenth century (From Le Gentil de La Barbinais, Nouveau voyage autour du monde . . . 3 vols., Paris, 1728-1729.)

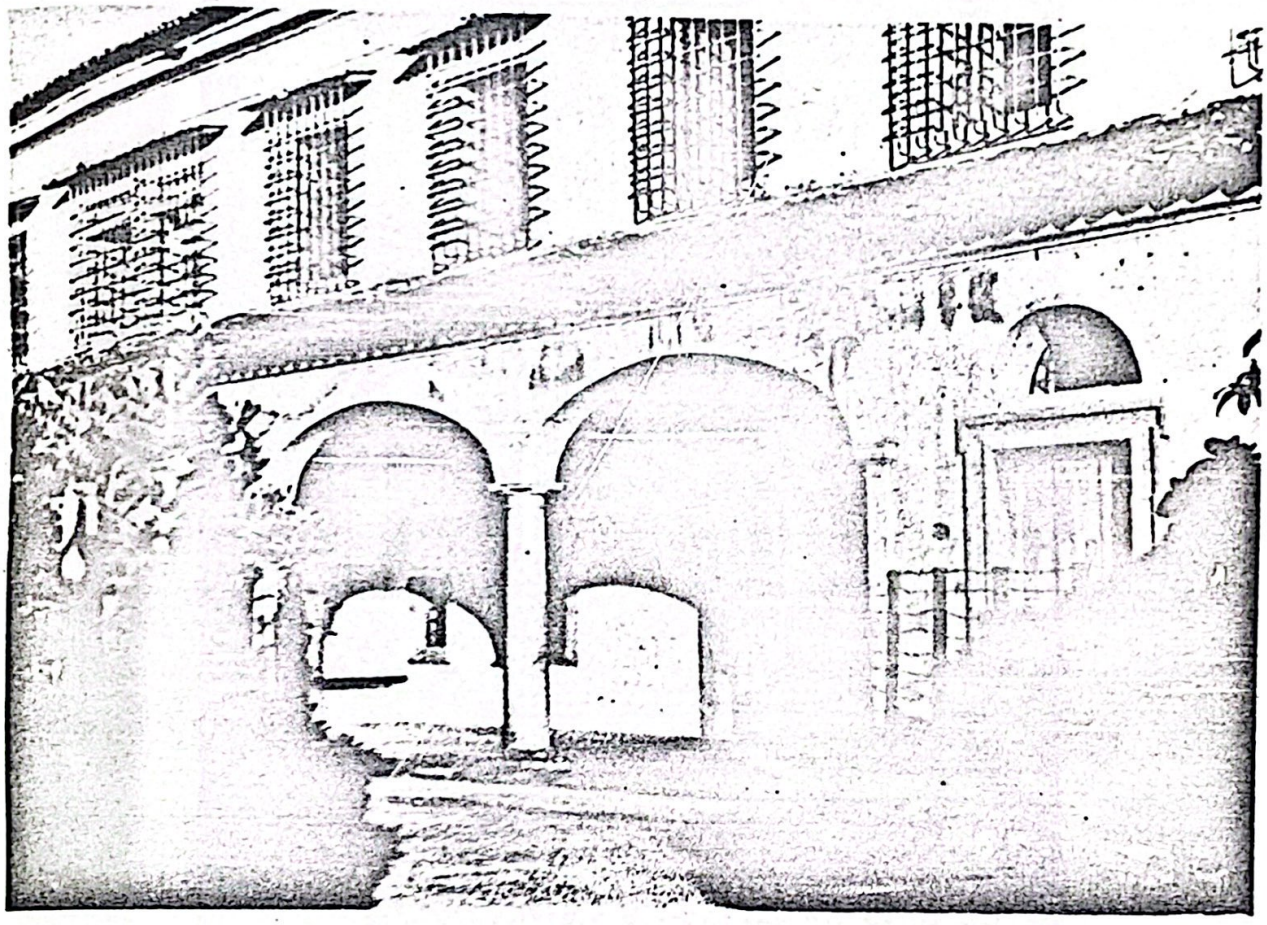


Plate II. The Desterro Convent

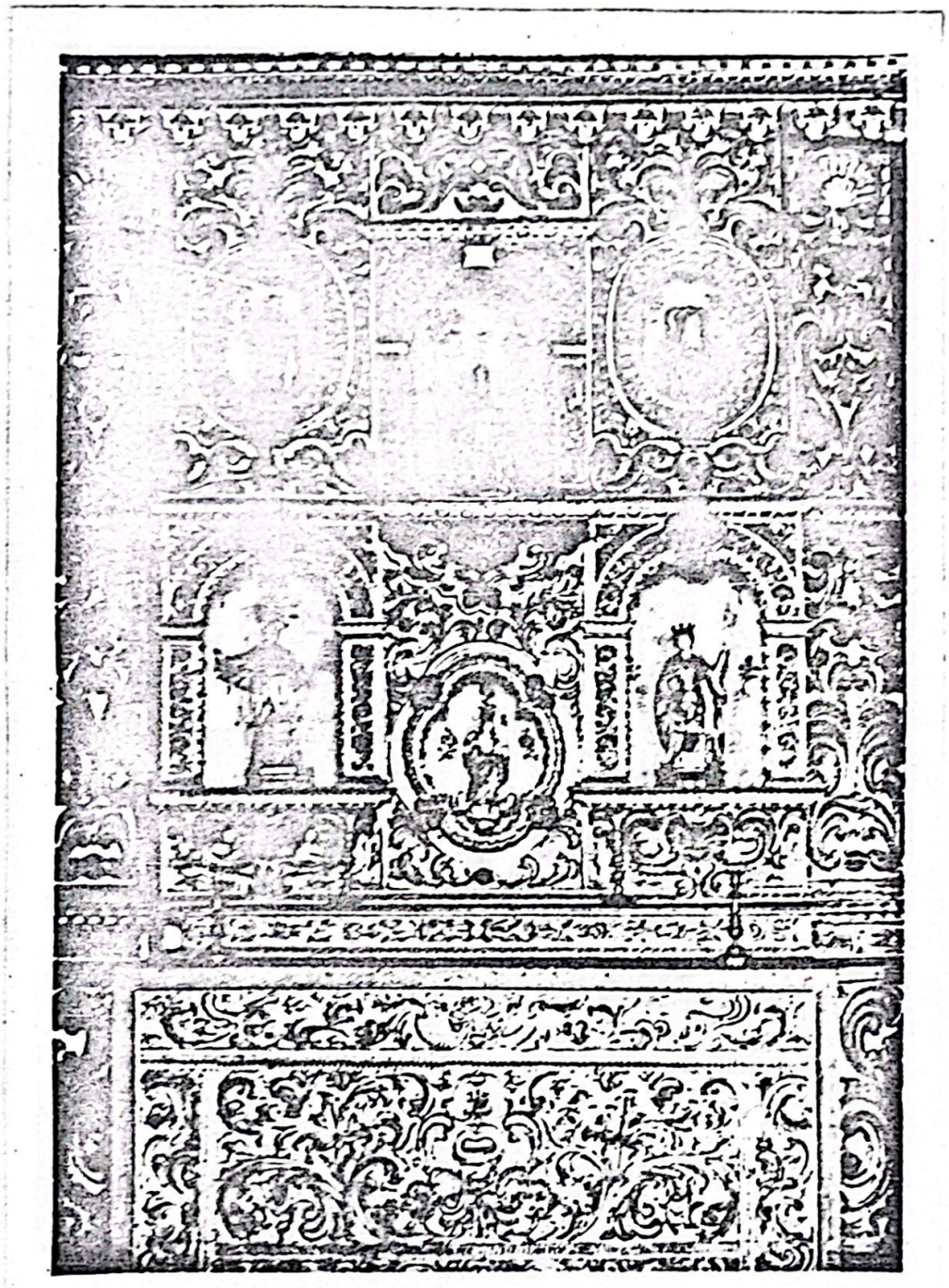
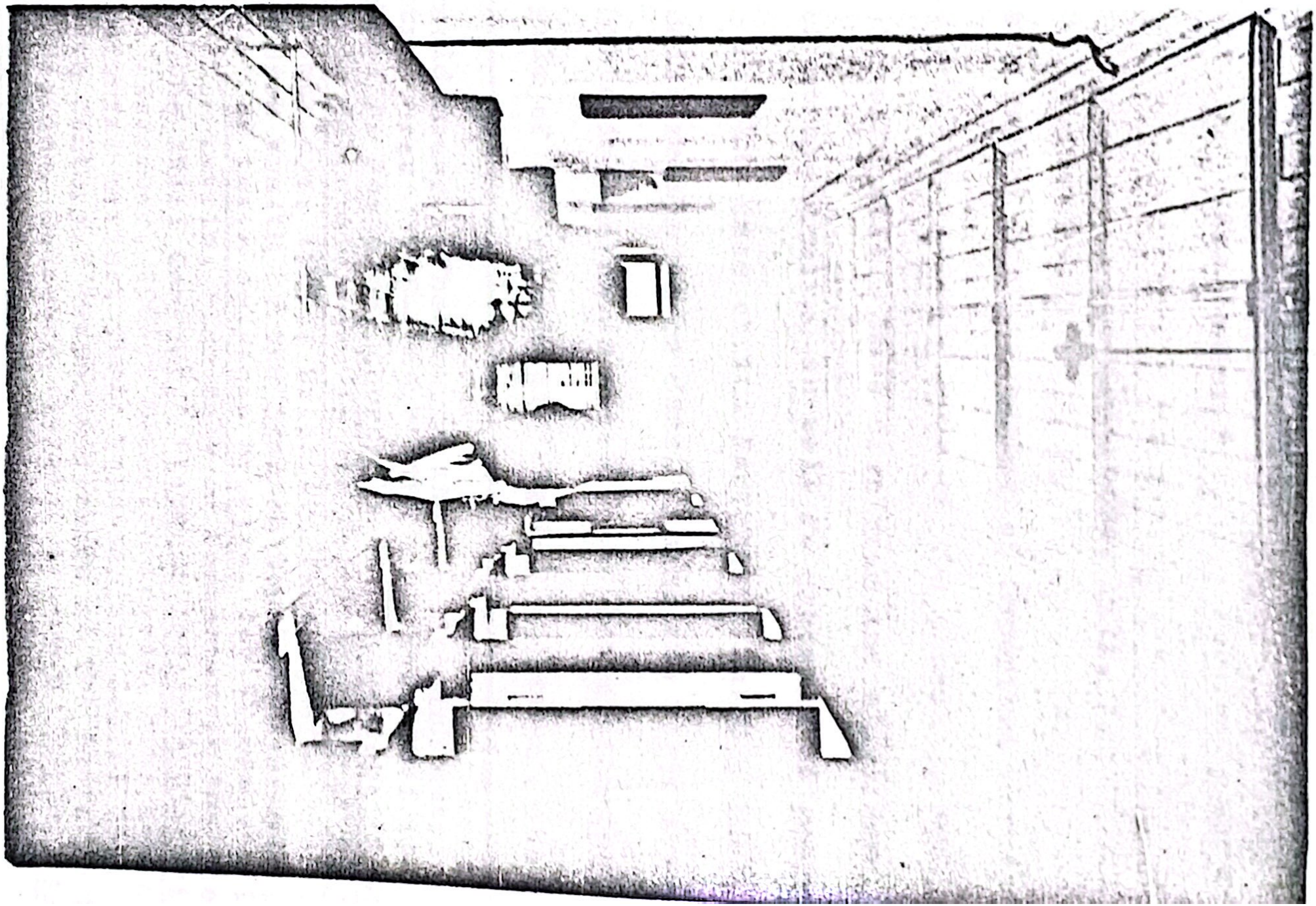


Plate III. Detail from the Chapel of the Desterro Convent



V THE ECONOMIC ROLE OF THE CONVENT: LOANS

"The rich ruleth over the poor,
And the borrower is servant unto
the lender."

--Proverbs, XXII, 7.

In the recent past, a number of important works have begun to assess the economic role of the Church in Spanish America.[1] Investigations have disclosed and clarified practices of money-lending, as well as patterns of property ownership. For the case of the Portuguese colony, these initial studies remain to be done. Among the various ecclesiastical histories which do exist, none deals with the financial role of the church at length.[2] Moreover, the few

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[1]Arnold Bauer, "The Church and the Spanish American Agrarian Structure: 1765-1865," The Americas, 28:1 (July, 1971), 78-98; Michael P. Costeloe, Church Wealth in Mexico: A Study of the Juzgado de Capellanias in the Archbishopric of Mexico, 1800-1856 (Cambridge, 1967); Brian R. Hamnett, "The Appropriation of Mexican Church Wealth by the Spanish Bourbon Government, 1805-1809," Journal of Latin American Studies, 1:2 (November, 1969), 85-113; Asunción Lavrin, "The Role of Nunneries in the Economy of New Spain in the XVIII Century," Hispanic American Historical Review, 46:4 (November, 1966); Asunción Lavrin, "The Feminine Orders in Colonial Mexico; Their Economic and Social Role in the Eighteenth Century," (Paper delivered at the American Historical Association Meeting, December, 1972); William B. Taylor, Landlord and Peasant in Colonial Oaxaca (Stanford, 1972).

[2]The most extensive treatment of an order is Serafim Leite, S.J. História da companhia de Jesus no Brasil (10 vols., Rio de Janiero-Lisbon, 1938-1950). Also on the Jesuits and more concerned with economic questions is Dauril Alden, "Economic Aspects of the Expulsion of the Jesuits from Brazil: A Preliminary Report," "Conflict and Continuity in Brazilian Society, eds., Henry H. Keith and S. F. Edwards (Columbia, S.C., 1969), pp. 25-65. Additional work on the Church includes Heliodoro P. Pires, Temas de História eclesiástica do Brasil (São Paulo, 1946); Frei Miguel Arcanjo da Anunciação, Crônica do Mosteiro de S. Bento de Olinda

extant works on colonial institutions -- both lay and clerical -- do not treat their economic operations in a systematic or analytical way.[3]

Not until 1808, when it was created by royal decree, did a bank exist in Brazil. In the absence of a formal credit structure, any body or individual with liquid assets could provide capital. The most formidable centers of economic activity in colonial Bahia were the brotherhoods, the religious corporations and the lay orders. Of these, the Misericórdia, the Monastery of Carmo and the Destêrro Convent were the most outstanding.[4]

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até 1763 (Recife, 1940); Frei Basilio Röwer, O.F.M., "A Ordem Franciscana no Brasil, 1500-1763," Anais do Quarto Congresso de História Nacional (AQCH) (13 vols., Rio de Janeiro, 1950-52), VIII (1951), 5-32; Frei Basilio Röwer, O.F.M., Páginas da história franciscana no Brasil (Petropolis, 1941); Bertha Leite, "História eclesiástica do Brasil," AQCH, X (1951), 207-260; Frei Bonifácio Mueller, O.F.M., Convento de Santo Antonio do Recife, 1606-1956: Esboço histórico (Recife, 1956); Con. Christiano Müller, Memória histórica sobre a religião na Bahia, 1823-1923 (Salvador, 1923); Província franciscana de Santo Antonio do Brasil (Recife, 1957); José Wanderley de Araujo Pinho, "Costumes monásticos na Bahia: freiras e recolhidas," Revista do Instituto Histórico da Bahia (RIHB), XXXIV (1918), 123-130; José Wanderley de Araujo Pinho, "Costumes monásticos na Bahia: Frades no século XVIII," RIHB, XXXVI (1920), 169-181.

[3]Marieta Alves, História da veneravel ordem terceira da penitencia do Seráfico Padre São Francisco da Congregação da Bahia (Salvador, 1948); Valentin Calderón, Biografia de um monumento: O antigo convento de Santa Teresa da Bahia (Salvador, 1970); A.J.R. Russell-Wood, Fidalgos and Philanthropists (Berkeley, 1968).

[4]Roberto C. Simonsen, História econômica do Brasil, 1500-1820 (6th ed., São Paulo, 1969), p. 410; Pinto de Aguiar, Bancos no Brasil colonial (Salvador, 1960), pp. 35-36; APB, Ordens régias, CV, doc. 106, fols. 220-221. According to Calderón, Biografia, p.93, the Convent of Santa Teresa should also be listed among the most formidable lenders. Within the Destêrro itself the slaves' brotherhood of São Gonçalo also provided capital on loan. See ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 58.

Prior to the seventeenth century the Holy See condemned money-lending as usury, and regarded conventual endowments as a form of simony. This papal action limited monastic financial resources and restricted ecclesiastical investments to landholding and pastoral activities. Once the papal disapproval of dowries and loans had dissipated, both a source of funds and a means to employ them were available to nunneries. By the time the Desterro was founded, the Holy See had allowed the capital of dowries and donations to be placed on loan or to be used for the purchases of stable forms of real estate.[5]

Sources of Capital

The liquid assets of the Desterro were derived from bequests to the convent and from the dowries of its religious. A legacy from one of Brazil's first governors, Mem de Sá, provided an initial pool of capital. Donations pledged by Salvador's citizenry and gifts from parents of religious and professing nuns supplemented this sum.[6]

At the outset, securing an income adequate for the support of the sisters posed difficulties. In spite of much vocal support from the municipal council members, the community's early finances were particularly unstable. A major complication was the method sometimes used to furnish dowries. In the

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[5]Rev. Thomas M. Kealy, Dowry of Women Religious (Published Ph.D. dissertation, Canon Law, Catholic University, 1941), pp. 32-34, 81-84; Lavrin, "The Role of Nunneries," 378-379.

[6]See Ch. 1; ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas I(II), 2(II), 29; Cxa. 2, Pastas 54, 63(I), Pasta 65(I); Sebastião Rocha Pitta, História da america portuguesa (3rd. ed., Salvador, 1950), p. 252-253; APB, Notas de escrituras, LXXVII, fols. 91v-95v.

late seventeenth century, rather than outright cash payment, the nun's endowment was frequently provided contractually by a lien. In assuming a lien, the contracting party attached his property and obligated himself for the payment of an annual income (equivalent to the established rate of interest) over a period of time. Hence, at six and a quarter percent, payment of a dowry could take as long as sixteen years before the property was relieved of its obligation. In Spanish America it was common for convents to hold liens in perpetuity for the purpose of securing steady incomes. If the Desterro made similar arrangements, there is no evidence of this in its records. Neither those who assumed liens in the early 1680's nor their heirs are present on the nunnery's debtors' rolls in 1704.[7]

Such contracts of obligation had a two-fold aim: first, to enable the convent to comply with the papal edict that the dowry be paid in cash; and second, to relieve the parent of the responsibility of paying in a lump sum. The complicating factors appear to have arisen with the sale of the property. If a lien had been placed on the real estate, the new owner automatically assumed payment of the debt. With each successive transfer of title, and the increasing remoteness of the new proprietor from the original transaction, it is likely that the convent's chances of collecting the debt diminished. For example, in 1690, Manuel Rodrigues da Silva paid 100,000 <u>reis</u> to the convent. Recorded on the receipt is

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[7]For examples of these legal arrangements, see ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 2(II); Cxa. 2, Pastas 54, 59(I,II), 62; Cxa. 3, Pasta U; see also, APB, <u>Notas</u>, LXII, fols. 212-213v; LXIv, fols. 62v-64; LXX, fols. 282-285v; LXXI, fols. 36-38, 150-153, 183-185; LXXII, fols. 205-208.

the explanation that he is obligated to pay "on account of [his] purchase of the fazenda which had belonged to the late Francisco Alvares Rodrigues, debtor to the convent by reason of his purchase of the fazenda from Diogo da Silveira, who originally assumed the obligation in order to place his daughter in the convent."[8] The conventual ledgers suggest that this property was eventually forfeited to the nunnery.

A second financial difficulty of these contractual arrangements was the reduction of capital reserves. Payment of dowries by installment meant that the convent was not in command of the entire dowry for a period of years. Although it is not possible to determine what proportion of families paid the endowment over time, it is clear that the institution was still unable to provide an adequate sustenance for its community two decades after its founding. At that time, the convent's attorney wrote to the crown lamenting the necessity of spending dowry monies and other funds belonging to the nunnery's inalienable patrimony.[9]

Of the two forms of financial activity permitted to the nunnery (lending and real estate), by far the greater share of investments and earnings derived from loans. Records around the turn of the eighteenth century indicate that the Desterro had acquired little income-yielding property, and that most of that held adjoined the convent. By 1704, it appears that the nunnery leased few more than a handful of lands and dwellings

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[8]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 19(II); Cxa. 2, Pastas 54, 62, 63(I).

[9]BNRJ, Manuscritos, II-33, 22, 114, no. 1.

for modest sums.[10] In 1764, capital on loan, now a substantial figure of 127,819,407 reis, earned 6,390,970 reis in interest annually, virtually five times the returns (1,342,650 reis) from property.[11] Several years later, while the gap had narrowed, the larger portion of the nunnery's income was still derived from money-lending. In 1772, the total resources of the Desterro amounted to 197,460,010 reis. Of these assets approximately 60 percent (118,811,687 reis) were placed on loan, whereas little more than 20 percent (46,559,766 reis) constituted the value of conventual property.[12] (Table II)

Conventual loans

For reasons which remain unclear, the practice of extending liens was gradually eliminated after the late seventeenth century. The lien was nothing more than a pledge of payment by the debtor to pay the convent out of annual earnings on real estate offered as collateral. Loans were predicated upon the receipt of conventual capital by the borrower. The interest rate of loans was set by law at six and a quarter percent in the seventeenth century, where it remained until 1757, when King José I lowered the premium to five percent.[13]

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[10]See Cxa. 2, ASCD, Pasta 72, which records earnings of 2,000 reis per year from the leasing of lands, and 16,000 reis annually from the rental of two dwellings. Incidental sales and purchases may be found in Cxa. 1, Pastas 2(II), 3; Cxa. 2, Pastas 51, 62, Cxa. 2.

[11]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6554-6555. The Desterro's capital on loan was larger than the total assets of the wealthy lay orderof St. Francis, which amounted to 110,000,000 réis in 1758. See Alves, História, pp. 28-29.

[12]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 9804, 9808 (November 22, 1772).

[13]Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, p. 198.

Loans appear in most cases to have been granted by the Desterro in the expectation of eventual satisfaction of both the principal lent and the interest due. Taylor has shown that monasteries in Spanish America frequently waived the repayment of principal in return for the perpetual receipt of interest.[14] In the case of the Desterro, restitution of the principal was sometimes overlooked, but the practice appears to have been a function of neglect rather than of conventual policy. In such instances the payment of interest did not extend beyond a span of twenty-five years, when the obligation was considered fulfilled.[15]

This is not to imply, however, that the administration of the convent's loans proceeded in an orderly and organized fashion, even by eighteenth-century standards. By comparison with another lending institution, the Misericordia, the Desterro's was a random and rather chaotic operation. In the 1690's, the Brotherhood's practices had been codified to insure accurate bookkeeping, to place a ceiling on individual loans, and to prohibit transfers of loans among debtors. Such measures had no parallel in the convent until the latter eighteenth century, when revamping of the convent's finances constituted one aspect of a more general attempt to reform the institution.[16]

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[14] Landlord and Peasant, p. 170.

[15] ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pastas 59(I), 64, 69.

[16] Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, p. 98. On the Desterro's reform, see Ch. 7.

An analysis of loan contracts and conventual receipts reveals which sectors of the population sought financial assistance from the nuns. These notarized documents frequently disclose the debtor's economic and professional status. Moreover, the conditions of theloan, the period of time required for payment and the application of the funds are usually also stated.

The Debtor

The debtors of the nunnery included sugar planters (millowners and lavradores), religious brotherhoods, clerics, women, tobacco farmers, merchants and other urban dwellers. However, by far the majority of those with financial obligations to the convent were millowners (senhores de engenho). From the late seventeenth to the last years of the eighteenth century, the Desterro's rolls were dominated by the leading planter families of the Recôncavo. Prominent among them were the well-known names of the Rocha Pittas, Deusdará's, Pires de Carvalhos, Sodré Pereiras, Cavalcante e Albuquerques and the Borges de Barros. What accounts for the predominance of these select families? The fact that many of them had children or other relatives in the convent in part explains their appearance on the nunnery's ledgers, since favoritism was a factor in the nuns' dispensation of funds. A second motive for the preponderance of the Recôncavo's most notable families was, simply stated, that their prestige and prominence facilitated their quest for loans. One contemporary alleged that Salvador's lending institutions gave preference to the influential millowner

and discriminated against the lavrador of lesser means.[17]

Sugar Planters

Among sugar planters why were debts incurred? What constituted the primary motives for borrowing? Because of the lamentable condition of the Destêrro's archive much of this information remains elusive. In those instances where the original loan contracts are available, there is frequently no indication whether the debt was eventually repaid. However imperfect the records, they do reveal some clues about the planters need for and use of credit. Primarily, conventual loans to planters were intended for the capitalization of sugar agriculture, that is, to cover the cost of his imports, slaves and equipment for the harvest. One example was the agreement made with Coronel Antonio Álvares Silva, who borrowed a substantial sum in 1747 "because of the lack of capital to satisfy some obligations that were assumed for the furnishing of slaves, cattle and horses for his engenho."[18] Although the data from the Destêrro is inconclusive, Russell-Wood has noted that the loans of the Misericórdia followed a cyclical pattern. Sugar planters routinely borrowed in October or

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[17]Having a daughter or relative in the convent could sometimes facilitate securing a loan. Supra., ch. 3; On the advantages of the large landowner in the credit structure, see João Rodrigues de Brito, A econômia Brasileira no alvorecer do século XIX (Salvador, N.D.); Stuart B. Schwartz, "Free Labor in a Slave Economy . . .," Colonial Roots of Modern Brazil, ed. Dauril Alden (Berkeley, 1973), p. 185, n. 107.

[18]APB, Notas, LXXXIII, fols. 100v-102v; See also, ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 59(I), Loan of Luis da Rocha Pitta Deus Dará, July 29, 1726, "fabricas para o fornecimento de suas fazendas;" Pinto de Aguiar, ed., Aspectos da econômia colonial (Salvador, 1957), pp. 41-42; José da Silva Lisboa, "Carta . . . em que lhe dá notícia desenvolvida sobre a Bahia," ABNRJ, XXXII (1914), p. 501.

November to cover the costs of harvesting and grinding of the cane. With the sale of the crop, the loan was repaid.[19]

Apart from borrowing for the purpose of obtaining working capital, planters frequently fell into debt as a consequence of current practices of land purchase or inheritance. Sugar mills, according to the records of colonial notaries, were rarely free of encumbrances. A planter who borrowed from the conventual treasury and offered his lands as collateral was, in essence, assuming a mortgage on his property. In return for the loan the convent legally became part-owner of the property. In the future, any purchaser of, or heir to the estate assumed the mortgage and therefore obligated himself for the loan's restitution to the convent. D. Maria Magdalena was the subject of conventual correspondence, when she inherited her father's property in 1750. After an unsuccessful attempt to secure repayment from the woman, the nunnery's attorney decided that she lacked even the means to alleviate her own distressed circumstances, and he therefore chose to pursue another heir, her brother.[20] The case of the surgeon, Antônio da Costa, illustrates the assumption of a debt following the purchase of property. He and his wife

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[19]Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, pp. 196-197.

[20]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 28, 29; See also Cxa. 1, Pastas 19(II), 20, 35; Cxa. 2, 70(I), for the case of Rodrigo da Costa de Almeida. Interesting insights into the division of inherited property may be gleaned from the will of the wealthy senhor de engenho, Paulo de Argolo, in Wanderley de Araujo Pinho, ed. "Um partilha de bens no Recôncavo da Bahia em 1779." Anais do Congresso Comemorativo (ACC) (4 vols., Rio de Janeiro, 1965), I, 313-367; For a reprint of a debtors roll of 1731, see Maria Isabel de Albuquerque, ed., "Convento do Desterro," Anais do Quarto Congresso de História (AQCH) (13 vols., Rio de Janeiro, 1950-1952), VIII (1951), pp. 415-430.

purchased the *engenho* Bomfin and its three *fazendas*, Contenda, Pereguri and Tororô, from Capitão José Luis Rocha Dorea, who owed the convent a total of 1,500,000 *reis*. The surgeon and his wife, as the new owners, assumed the full extent of the debt, including the future annual interest.[21]

Was planter indebtedness an inevitable facet of sugar agriculture? How does the level of the *senhor de engenho*'s debt compare with the value of his property and the earnings of the mill? Certainly, no definitive answer to these questions is as yet in sight. Since no systematic study of the size, duration of tenure or value of lands in Bahian Recôncavo has yet been made for the eighteenth century, inquiries into the assets and debits of the planter remain far from conclusive. Furthermore, the problem must be approached with an awareness of certain difficulties. For example, estimating the worth of Bahian sugar mills is fraught both with evident complexities and, no doubt, undetected sources of error. Although notarial records are likely to be a rich font of data, their reliability can be called into question. Planters were reputed to have inflated or understated the values of their holdings in accordance with their momentary needs.[22] Secondly, even in a given year the values of various *engenhos* could vary enormously

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[21]APB, *Notas*, CXV, fols. 218v-220. For other examples of the same practice, see APB, *Notas*, XXCI, fols. 67v-70; CXIX, fols. 353-356; CXXII, fols. 93v-94; CXXV, fols. 372v-373v; CIIIL, fols. 179v-181; CLV, fols. 187-188.

[22]José de Wanderley Pinho, *História de um engenho do Recôncavo* (Rio de Janeiro, 1946), p. 322.

depending upon the size of their cane fields, their acreage for forests and pasture lands, the numbers of lavradores, slaves, oxen, cattle and horses utilized, and their accessibility to water transport. José da Silva Lisboa noted in 1781 that prices for engenhos could range anywhere from 500 to 70,000 cruzados.[23] Third, and most important, neither debts nor land values have meaning in themselves, and must be considered within the general framework of the economy. The following discussion of planter indebtedness keeps the above-mentioned hazards of studying the subject strictly in view.

Since the late seventeenth century, indebtedness of the planter was a constant feature of sugar agriculture. By the opening decades of the eighteenth century conditions had changed little except to worsen. In the 1720's the situation had reached crisis proportions. Currency in the colony had since the latter seventeenth century been scarce and the creation of a temporary Bahian mint in 1694 to issue specie did not bring lasting relief. Most of the coinage continued to flow in the direction of the mother country. Moreover, reduced sugar earnings, as a result of the fall in prices, meant that less currency entered Brazil. Consequently, necessities for the operation of the mill were purchased at a time when the buying power of sugar had greatly decreased. In 1700 a field slave could be bought for 80,000 reis, or the equivalent of 714 kilograms of sugar (computed at 112 reis per kilogram). Twenty years later it required 1735 kilograms of sugar

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[23]Schwartz, "Free Labor,", pp. 163-164; Silva Lisboa, p. 501.

(earning 83 reis per kilogram) to purchase a comparable slave whose price had risen to 145,000 reis.[24]

The combined effect of higher operational costs and less available currency forced even the wealthiest of planters to arrange for credit. Luis da Rocha Pitta Deus Dará, owner of not less than two sugar mills which earned him considerable sums by comparison to his social peers,[25] contracted a debt of 2,600,000 reis in July, 1726 to finance equipment for his estate. In return for the loan he mortgaged his engenho of São Brás. After a year's grace, he was required to repay the loan at the current rate of six and a quarter percent interest. Presumably he did so, because the convent's scribe noted that the debt was satisfied on July 23, 1749, some twenty-five years after he had contracted the obligation.[26]

According to contemporaries' reports, the mid-eighteenth century was a period of depression and stagnation in the plantation economy.[27] If the fall in earnings and the rise in prices of slaves resulted in the purchase of fewer fieldhands, a drop in production might also be expected. Reliable estimates

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[24]Ward Barrett and Stuart Schwartz, "Two Colonial Sugar Economies: Morelos, Mexico and Bahia, Brazil, A Comparison," (Unpublished manuscript, 1973), p. 33.

[25]José Antônio Caldas, Notícia geral de tôda esta capitania da Bahia (Ed. fasc., Salvador, 1951), pp. 429-442, lists his earnings in 1754 at 8,196,800 reis. Baltazar de Vasconcelos grossed 7,795,290 reis.

[26]For the contract of Rocha Pitta, see ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 59(I), Albuquerque, "Convento . . .," AQCH, VIII (1951), p. 424; Lourenço da Pina Cruz' income in 1754 was 1,145,000 reis. See Caldas, Notícia geral, p. 437; For repayment of his debt to the Destêrro, see ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 64.

[27]Wenceslau Pereira da Silva, "Parecer em que se propoem os meios mais convenientes para suspender a ruina. . .," ABNRJ, XXXI (1913) 27-31; Pinto de Aguiar, ed., Aspectos, pp. 54-63.

have placed Bahian sugar production of 1600 at around 600,000 arrobas per year. A century later figures had remained relatively constant at 528,099 arrobas produced annually in Bahia in spite of the drastic decline in sugar prices. However, by the mid-eighteenth century the Bahian mills produced little more than half their earlier yearly levels. Exports in 1754 had pitched to approximately 332,500 arrobas.[28]

The earnings of a millowner varied greatly depending upon such factors as the extent and quality of his lands, and the numbers of slaves at his disposal. Judging from José Antonio Caldas' summary of engenho yields in 1754, it is apparent that the average millowner rarely grossed more than 3,000,000 reis.[29] By 1781 yearly earnings were estimated at 5,700,000 reis for the average mill. This figure is roughly substantiated by the calculations of an anonymous writer in the 1790's. The author, basing his computations on the total production of approximately 150 operating engenhos in the Bahian Recôncavo, concluded that the average mill

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[28]The region is assumed to be the area of Salvador and the Recôncavo. The sugar exported has been assumed to be equivalent to the sugar produced. In calculating the amount exported in 1754-1755, 35 arrobas has been considered the size of the average caixa. See Caldas, Notícia geral, p. 438. I have used the average of his figures of 26-45 arrobas per caixa (35 arrobas/cxa.) and 9-10,000 caixas (9,500 cxas.) exported annually. The caixa was obviously not an exact measure. Silva Lisboa, "Carta. . .," cites a figure in 1781 of 50 arrobas per caixa. In the 1790's it was considered equivalent to 40 arrobas. See Pinto de Aguiar, Aspectos, pp. 36-37, 54-63; See also, Schwartz and Barrett, "Two Colonial Sugar Economies," pp. 10, 30.

[29]Caldas, Notícia geral, p. 431.

earned approximately 6,556,666 *reis* annually.[30]

However, gross earnings provide only a partial picture of the millowner's economic circumstances, since his intake was considerably reduced by necessary annual outlays for slaves, equipment and overhead on loans. Although no figures prior to the 1790's on the annual expenditure of *engenhos* were located, the estimates of this latter period offer instructive guidelines. In the 1790's the ordinary millowner reinvested approximately two-thirds of his total earnings into refurbishing his *engenho* and paying his loans.[31] Since this was a time of high sugar prices, both earnings and expenses were no doubt higher than those of the mid-eighteenth century. It also might be reasoned that during times of economic stress earnings fell faster than did expenses, since of the two quantities,

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[30]This figures must be regarded as approximate. The 1781 estimate of earnings given by Silva Lisboa, "Carta . . .," pp. 500-501, is based on a workforce of 50 to 80 slaves who produced 100 *tarefas*, or 6300 *arrobas* of sugar. The author writing in the 1790's based his calculations on a workforce of 100 slaves. The numbers of functioning *engenhos* in the *Recôncavo* in the period 1750-1800 has not yet been definitively established. Schwartz and Barrett, "Two Colonial Sugar Economies," p. 38, prefer Santos Vilhena's figure of 260 mills in 1800. See Luis dos Santos Vilhena, *A Bahia no século XVIII* (Salvador, 1969), I, p. 173. Estimates, however, for the number of mills at the turn of the century range from 170 to over 400. The probable source of the discrepancy lies in the area under consideration. In 1754, Caldas, *Notícia geral*, mentions a total of 172 mills -- many inoperable -- in the *capitania*. This figure is confirmed by another estimate of 179 mills in 1757. See Schwartz and Barrett, p. 38. Since the anonymous writer of the 1790's places the figure at 170 total mills (150 in operation) in the *comarca*, I am inclined -- even taking into account the expansion of the sugar industry during the latter eighteenth century -- to lower Santos Vilhena's estimate. For the calculations of the 1790's, see Pinto de Aguiar, *Aspectos*, pp. 34-35.

[31]Pinto de Aguiar, *Aspectos*, pp. 36-40, 42; Approximately 4,390,000 *reis* of 6,556,666 *reis* were ploughed back into maintaining the operation of the *engenho*. The remaining profits of 2,166,666 -- or, 2,566,666 *reis*, including the sale of additional produce of the plantation -- were consumed by living expenses.

expenses for maintenance were likely to be the more inelastic. That is to say, in spite of fluctuations in the external market and the reduction in earnings, slaves and equipment remained constant necessities. If such were the case, the instability of income combined with the seeming inflexible costs for maintenance and overhead made credit the only alternative.

When annual incomes diminished and earnings dwindled, did the land on which sugar was grown similarly fall in value? Although Russell-Wood alludes to a decline in land values at mid-century, he fails to provide evidence for the phenomenon.[32] If the worth of cane growing lands diminished, were planters in seeking credit now forced to mortgage their properties at a fraction of their former worth? On this subject, little conclusive information has been found. It appears that in order to secure a loan it was necessary for the planter to offer his entire holdings as collateral. Evident in this transaction was the disparity between the value of the security offered and the loan obtained. For example, a relatively modest engenho in 1752 with forty slaves was valued at roughly 15,394,000 reis.[33] The loan obtained with with this collateral, however, rarely exceeded 3,000,000 reis. Did this mean that engenhos could not be mortgaged for more than a fifth of their market price? Did a decline in land values thus make credit accessible only to the wealthier

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[32]Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, pp. 196-197.

[33]Wanderley Pinho, História, pp. 138-139, as quoted in Kennedy, "Bahian Elites, 1750-1822," HAHR, 53:3 (August, 1973), 416-417; APB, Notas, LXI, fols. 67v-69v; LXXI, fols. 216v-219; Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, pp. 196-197.

planters? These questions still remain to be answered.

After a century of unstable prices and economic difficulties, the sugar sector experienced a period of recovery beginning in the 1770's. This was due to a series of circumstances, which included the loosening of royal controls and the abolition of the fleet system in 1765. Moreover, European wars in the 1770's impeded the Caribbean sugar trade. Lastly, the revolution in Haiti eliminated a prominent competitor. Prices for sugar leaving Bahia, rose from 1,160 _reis_ on the average per _arroba_ in 1755 to more than twice that level (2,600 _reis_) in 1781.[34]

The rise in earnings and influx of specie restored vigor only temporarily and illusorily to a moribund sugar agriculture. Elevated incomes were accompanied by an equally precipitous ascent in prices. A climb in commodity costs was only one aspect of the inflationary economy.[35] Visions of immeasurable profits lured many to invest in real estate.[36] Most likely, rising sugar prices spurred a corresponding elevation in the value of sugar properties, just as contraction in the sugar economy in the earlier part of the century was likely to have been followed by a decline in land values. Although far from conclusive, the data available suggests that this may have been the case. One contemporary reported that by 1790 the cost of an average mill was computed at

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[34]Silva Lisboa, "Carta . . .," p. 502; Wanderley Pinho, _História_, p. 211; Pinto de Aguiar, _Aspectos_, pp. 66-72, 80; Rodrigues de Brito, _A economia_, pp. 133-134.

[35]See the excellent study of Katia M. de Queirós Mattoso, "Conjuncture et Societé au Bresil a la fin du XVIIIe Siècle," _Cahiers des Amériques Latines_, 5 (1970), 3-53.

[36]Silva Lisboa, "Carta . . .," p. 501.

40,000,000 reis. This indicates a rise from 24,000,000 reis in 1781, and 15,400,000 reis in the 1750's.[37]

Purchase of property was considerably facilitated by the financing techniques of the period. As little as one third of the asking price of the property was required in downpayment. For example, an engenho worth 24,000,000 reis could be bought with 6,400,000 reis in cash with another 1,600,000 reis spent for its preparation. The remainder was paid off in yearly installments from the earnings of the mill.[38]

Most of the land that exchanged hands for a fraction of its real value had been heavily mortgaged to lending institutions such as the Desterro. One of the convent's transactions of the late 1770's is typical of the turnover of real estate in the period. Francisco Maurício Pereira Lisboa, a modest millowner with thirty slaves and fifty head of cattle, purchased a strip of land valued at 2,800,000 reis from the prominent Inácio de Siqueira Villa Boas with a downpayment of 400,000 reis. In the process, he assumed Inácio's mortgage of 2,000,000 reis to the convent and initiated his payments to the nunnery with a further 200,000 reis.[39]

While economic recovery encouraged many to assume the obligations of mortgaged estates for the first time, there is no indication that it enabled others to discharge their debts.

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[37]Pinto de Aguiar, Aspectos, pp. 34-35; Silva Lisboa, "Carta . . .," p. 501. Kennedy, "Bahian Elites," quoting Wanderley Pinho, História, pp. 129-131; 138-139.

[38]Silva Lisboa, "Carta. . .," p. 501.

[39]APB, Notas, CIXX, fols. 353-356 (July 21, 1779); see also, CXXII, fols. 93v-94 (February 26, 1780); CXXV, fols. 372v-373v (September 30, 1785).

Many years of low earnings had resulted in an accumulation of obligations, which had become so difficult to collect that creditors frequently allowed interest payments to lapse.[40] By the 1780's and 1790's few *engenhos* were mortgaged for less than 2,000,000 *reis*, perhaps the equivalent of a year's net income.[41] When the extraordinarily wealthy Paulo de Argolo died in 1779, he owed approximately 1,500,000 *reis* to the Destêrro, in addition to other obligations to the Convent of Santa Teresa as well as to various individuals.[42] Cristovão da Rocha Pitta, in spite of his enormous estate of several *engenhos*, wrote to the Destêrro in 1803 that his earnings from his annual harvest would not even cover the interest on his loan.[43]

The sugar planter's need for credit and their overwhelming predominance among the ranks of the Destêrro's debtors gave the convent's lending operations a somewhat unidimensional aspect. However, particularly during the later years of the eighteenth century, the records of the convent indicate a diversity among the debtors.

Tobacco Planters

Like sugar, tobacco in the latter eighteenth century

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[40]Pinto de Aguiar, *Aspectos*, pp. 72-76; Silva Lisboa, "Carta . . .," p. 501; AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 9805 (December 1, 1778).

[41]APB, *Notas*, CXV, fols. 218v-220; CXVII, fols. 323v-325v; CIXX, fols. 34v-37; CXXV, fols. 372v-373; CXXXVI, fols. 29-31; CXLVII, fols. 179v-181, 389-389v; Pinto de Aguiar, *Aspectos*, pp. 72-73.

[42]Wanderley Pinho, "Uma partilha . . .," ACC, I, 339.

[43]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 57.

benefitted from an expansion of commerce.[44] Although present as early as the 1730's tobacco farmers appear more conspicuously on the Destêrro's rolls after the 1780's.[45] Undoubtedly the nature of tobacco agriculture -- which required far less capital and fewer slaves to operate than did sugar -- explains the lesser need of the tobacco entrepreneur for loans. As compared with the necessary 50 to 100 slaves and comparable number of draught animals required for sugar agriculture, tobacco farming had limited needs. A picture of the extent of a tobacco holding is apparent from a review of a loan contract signed with the Destêrro. On October 22, 1792, Captain José Simões de Brito borrowed the modest sum of 738,453 <u>reis</u>. In return for the loan he mortgaged a farm with the following equipment: one structure with eight doors and seven windows, another building (roofed but open at the sides) for rolling tobacco, five slave huts, six head of cattle, and twelve slaves.[46]

Tobacco growers, like sugar planters, sometimes evaded payment on their debts. Manuel de Amorim Lima was a particularly recalcitrant debtor who resisted conventual pressures. The convent's attorney had advised a generous policy, exempting the debtor from payment of the principal, and requiring only the payment of the interest on the debt. Shortly following this act of clemency, the <u>procurador</u> discovered that in spite of the man's alleged poverty, he was earning money through the sale

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[44]Pinto de Aguiar, <u>Aspectos</u>, p. 102; Silva Lisboa, "Carta . . .,"

[45]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 20, 28.

[46]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 59(I).

of tobacco to boatmen who ferried it from the Recôncavo to Salvador. He subsequently recommended that the farmer be ordered to repay both the principal and the interest.[47]

Urban Residents

Urban residents appear more frequently on the Destêrro's debtor rolls in the latter third of the eighteenth century. The economic revival of these years was likely to have affected not only the rural but also the urban zones, as greater sugar and tobacco sales likewise meant increased profits for commerce. Real estate in the city, as in the country, became a desirable commodity. Archival records suggest that the convent only began financing the purchase of urban buildings during this period. Also apparent was an increased number of persons contracting loans and offering urban holdings as collateral.[48]

Merchants were also more evident in the latter eighteenth century. Among others, Fructuoso Vicente Vianna borrowed money for business purposes.[49] Large loans required that the applicant furnish a substantial security as well as two guarantors. José Ricardo Gomes' application for 2,800,000 reis was reviewed by both the abbess and the attorney of the convent.[50] Some of the conventual debtors were of modest financial

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[47]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 19(II), 20.

[48]APB, Notas, CXXII, fols. 103v-104; CXXV, fols. 374-375; CXXXIV, fols. 120-121; CXLV, fols. 151v-154; CXLVI, 109-112.

[49]Kennedy, "Bahian Elites," 421; APB, Notas, CXXA, fols. 151-152v.

[50]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 37.

stature. Short term loans for small quantities were also obtainable. In 1777, an urban resident, Manuel Fernandes Passos, took a loan of 130,000 _reis_ at five percent interest for which he offered a single-story dwelling as collateral.[51] Likewise, Luis Antonio de Oliveira Mendes Dias Lobato borrowed 12,000 _reis_ in the early nineteenth century on the condition that the loan be repaid within a period of two months.[52]

The Creditor

The debtors' side of the ledger is amply recorded in the historical literature of the colonial period, owing primarily to theprominent social and political position of the planter. By contrast, the creditors' side has neither left as much evidence of its activities, nor has it been given the same attention by historians. As an institution lending capital primarily to agriculture, the Destêrro's role was an important one. The size and number of the convent's loans were greater than any otherinstitution of Bahia, with the possible exception of the Misericórdia and the Convent of Carmo. The financial dealings of the nunnery certainly dwarfed those of the monks of Santa Teresa. During the period from 1686-1826 Santa Teresa recorded 119 notarial transactions of every type, of which at least 55 were loans. By comparison, the Destêrro signed virtually hundreds of loan contracts during the same period. Whereas the friars' loans only occasionally reached 300,000 _reis_, the Destêrro rarely negotiated loans of less than four times that amount.[53] In the latter half

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[51]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 59(I).

[52]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 69.

[53]Calderón, _Biografia_, Appendix II, 225-241.

of the eighteenth century, the nunnery held the mortgages of more than twenty engenhos.[54]

The prevailing view of the creditor's position, perhaps best stated in Wanderley Pinho's Um engenho do recôncavo, is that the debt-ridden planter was at the mercy of an exploitative caste of merchant-factors. Russell-Wood has likewise contributed to this conception of Bahian social relations with his portrayal of the conflict between merchant and planter interests.[55] Only recently has doubt been cast on this interpretation of circumstances. Kennedy has suggested that by the late eighteenth century the two elements may not have been distinctly separate. He proposes the likelihood of a web of connections through family ties, bureaucratic positions and property holding practices. He has moreover indicated that the planters' option in choosing a lender extended beyond the score of major businessmen to a host of other individuals and institutions.[56]

The relationship between creditor and debtor, or merchant and planter, cannot be characterized generically as exploitative.

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[54]Pinto de Aguiar, Ensaios da história (2 vols., Salvador, 1960), I, 97-98. For the number of engenhos, see fn. 30.

[55]Wanderley Pinho, História, pp. 307-313; Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, 120-121.

[56]Kennedy, "Bahian Elites," pp. 421-422; Although his thesis is credible his supporting evidence is weak. Catherine Lugar, whose study of Bahian merchants is noteworthy for its effort at quantification, concludes that not more than 15 of 400 merchants owned sugar mills. "The Mercantile Community of Salvador, Bahia, 1780-1830," (A Research report delivered at the Brazilian Committee, American Historical Association, December, 1972), p. 9.

Primarily, important differences in their potential for abuse existed among lenders. A merchant in the position of supplier clearly retained the upper hand in his dealings with the planter. For instance, a negociante who had contracted to supply not only credit, but also slaves, equipment, animals and imported items to the senhor de engenho in exchange for his sugar exercised a degree of control over the relationship not accessible to the convent. If the planter defaulted upon his payments, the factor could withhold the necessary goods, thereby virtually holding the planter under a state of siege. Alternatively, he could charge more for the goods he rendered, thus placing the millowner further in debt to him.[57]

From the vantage point of the Desterro, it appears that both the creditor and the debtor were ultimately at the mercy of the sugar cycle. If the planter suffered losses, it was the nunnery that subsequently saw its revenues decline, as the planter defaulted on loan payments. Unlike the merchant-factor, who supplied the sugar grower with imported goods in return for the purchase of his product, the convent could not exercise the same dominance by withholding goods until payment from the planter had been obtained. As many a conventual attorney learned, collection of overdue debts was an extremely arduous process.

The Desterro, moreover, did not always receive payment of its loans in cash. Unstable agricultural conditions, unfavorable market prices and a shortage of currency during most of the eighteenth century gave rise to the practice of reimburse-

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[57]Silva Lisboa, "Carta . . .," p. 501.

ment of debts in kind. For example, Baltazar de Vasconcellos, owner of three engenhos that generated an income of not less than 7,795,290 reis in 1754, sent a shipment of sugar in 1743 to cover his annual payment. Three of his crates inspected by the officials of the municipal council, were regarded as sugar of "humid and inferior" quality, although two others met the highest standards. Lourenço da Pina Cruz, a planter of lesser means, whose annual income reached no more than 1,145,000 reis in 1754, sent a single crate of inferior white sugar in restitution of his debt.[58] Reimbursement in sugar shipped directly to the nunnery was sometimes preferred by the debtor on grounds other than economy or efficiency. Vasco Marinho de Miranda, as heir to his father's estate, had assumed his obligations to the convent. Apparently, he was preoccupied with his inability to liquidate his deceased father's debts, as he asked the nunnery to be discreet about his payment-- presumably for the purpose of deceiving his remaining creditors.[59]

Not only sugar planters, but tobacco farmers likewise paid their due with agricultural produce. The earliest indication of the nunnery's acceptance of tobacco rolls is in 1735; thereafter, the policy apparently continued well into the 1780's.[60]

Acceptance of payment in kind was not a novelty, as the

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[58]For a list of senhores de engenho and their incomes from the sale of sugar, see Caldas, Notícia geral, pp. 429-442; See also, ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 21, 28, 29; Cxa. 2, Pasta 64.

[59]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 21.

[60]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 20, 28.

convent had established administrative machinery to carry out such transactions. The convent's records indicate that up to 1751 sugar was sent first to be weighed in Bahia by the inspectors of the municipal council, where it was taxed before being exported to Lisbon. On arrival in the metropolis, the produce was again weighed and examined by the convent's representative before being sold on the Lisbon market.[61]

The problems of negotiating debts paid in produce, rather than specie, were numerous and far from unique to the nunnery. Both creditors and debtors consistently complained of fraudulent practices throughout the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Planters bemoaned their victimization by scurrilous merchants, alleging that their sugar was purchased at less than its market value, while slaves were sold to them at inflated prices. Commercial men, on the other hand, repeatedly claimed that planters defrauded them by substituting inferior grades of sugar for superior. By 1690, regulations requiring that sugar crates be identified with the name of the planter were in effect. And moreover, a commission had been established to determine the price of sugar fifteen days before the departure of the fleet. These reforms nonetheless provided little remedy for the persistent abuses. Disturbances and pleas to the crown continued well into the 1740's.[62] In 1751 the Mesa de Inspeção was created for the purpose of examining and classifying the sugar and tobacco to be exported.

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[61]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 64.

[62]Wanderley Pinho, História, pp. 307-309; Schwartz, "Free Labor," pp. 185-187; DHBNRJ, LXXXVII, 127-128; Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, pp. 70-71.

Although these reforms did not end the conflict between buyer and seller, they made it somewhat more difficult to perpetrate frauds.[63]

In spite of the reputedly widespread nature of such practices there is no evidence that the convent attempted to defraud its debtors by offering them artifically low prices for their produce or by bribing inspectors to influence their classification of the sugar. In fact, the records for 1743 demonstrate that the twenty-nine crates of sugar received by the nunnery were evaluated at the current market price.[64] Quite to the contrary, there are indications that on occasion, the convent may have been swindled by a planter who substituted a low-grade mascovado in place of white sugar. A Lisbon notary in 1739 certified that one of the crates received from the Desterro had been misrepresented, and was filled with the coarser grade.[65]

Whether debts were satisfied in kind or in specie, the collection of obligations was a laborious task for the convent. The primary means available to the nunnery for obtaining payment was the exertion of pressure upon the debtor. Presumably the efficacy of this method depended upon the inclination and zeal of the abbess or procurador in office. Hence it achieved spotty results.

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[63]For examples of these abuses, see ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 64; Pinto Aguiar, Aspectos, p. 63; Wanderley Pinho, História, p. 211.

[64]Pinto de Aguiar, Aspectos, p. 63; ASCD, Pasta 64, Cxa.2.

[65]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 19(II); Cxa. 2, Pasta 64. Of course, it is also conceivable that the convent itself tried to falsify the sugar in order to fetch a higher selling price.

There is some evidence that some effort was made to collect debts in the 1730's and 1740's. Apparently, this attempt met with little success, since in 1764 the archbishop complained that a large portion of the Destêrro's loans had never been satisfied. He revealed that fifty-one debtors had died owing more than 33,000,000 reis to the convent. This amount represented roughly 25 percent of the Destêrro's capital invested in loans.[66] (Table II) No systematic drive to obtain restitution for outstanding loans was undertaken until the 1770's, when the Destêrro's accounts experienced a general overhaul at the instigation of the prelate. Fortunately, a large portion of the correspondence of the convent's attorneys from this period survived. It reveals that conventual agents were sent into the hinterlands of the Recôncavo to pursue debtors to their rural holdings, to investigate their potential for payment, and to secure restitution of their obligations.

As mentioned earlier, the convent's debtors, even during the latter eighteenth century, were drawn mainly from the sugar sector. Among sugar growers, however, we find judges, royal officials, widows, coroneis, brotherhoods and churchmen.[67] Particularly apparent are a number of churchmen, whose religious zeal did not always inspire a diligent repayment of temporal obligations. The padre Manuel Garcia Pinto, chaplain of a rural parish, who claimed to be indigent, was described by the collector as still in possession of ample numbers of slaves.

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[66]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 28; Cxa. 2, Pasta 64; AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls. 1ª ser. cat., 9805 (December, 1778).

[67]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 19(I,II), 20, 21, 27, 28, 29; Albuquerque, "Convento. . .," AQCH, VIII, 422-430.

The procurador went on to inquire if the nuns intended to prosecute.[68] The priest, Gabriel Rabello Marinho, lavrador and resident in Cachoeira, engaged in a lengthy correspondence with the convent's leading attorney in 1778. Rabello Marinho had borrowed modestly from the nunnery's coffers, promising to repay the loan within the year. At the time, he was engaged in a suit involving a contested inheritance. A subsequent letter of June 18, 1778 relates that he was hindered from carrying out his business owing to an inflammation of the leg. Another cleric, Padre Alvarenga, likewise a debtor to the convent, failed to liquidate his debt and as a consequence, five of his urban dwellings were appropriated.[69]

Pressure exerted by the convent was resisted by debtors with the few means they had at their disposal. While some obtained exemption from interest payments from the convent or the archbishop for short periods of time, others petitioned the crown for a complete moratorium on their debts.[70] The case of Jacinto Tomas de Faria is particularly poignant since his financial upsets appear in part to have been responsible for subsequent marital difficulties. In 1764, while still a resident of urban Salvador, he received his first loan from the nunnery. Conventual records of 1771 note that he repaid a small portion of it.[71] He subsequently traveled to Lisbon to obtain

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[68]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 19(II), 20; Cxa. 2, Pasta 59(I).

[69]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 21; Cxa. 2, Pastas 50, 64.

[70]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 20; Cxa. 2, Pasta 59(I).

[71]The information concerning Jacinto Tomas Faria's difficult financial situation may be found inclusively in ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 5(I), 19(II); Cxa. 2, Pasta 63(II); APB, Notas, CXVII, fols. 109v-110.

a five-year moratorium from the King for the purpose of temporarily delivering himself from his creditors. The accounts of the convent at this time reconfirm the debt as well as the moratorium, and register the mortgage of the man's sugarmill, with all of its lands, slaves, cattle, horses and other possessions.[72] By 1779, the moratorium had expired and he was again faced with the necessity of responding to the insistent demands of his creditors, the nunnery among them. In a pathetic letter, he wrote that he had thus far shipped only the limited harvest from his lavradores and that he was in the process of grinding the little that remained from his own planting. He pleaded that the crop had been exceptionally poor owing to a drought. According to estimates of one contemporary, who claims that an average yield in 1781 amounted to 1600-2000 paes of sugar, the 500 paes produced by Tomas de Faria certainly appeared pitifully inadequate.[73]

Jacinto's financial problems were soon compounded by conjugal difficulties. Undoubtedly preoccupied with the threat of imminent bankruptcy, Jacinto made frequent trips to his engenho in the interior, while his wife remained in their urban residence. An estrangement between the two ensued and his wife barred him from entering her rooms. Furthermore, in his

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[72]APB, Notas, CXVII, fols. 109v-110.

[73]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 19(II); Silva Lisboa, "Carta...," pp. 500-501. If anything, Silva Lisboa's figures may be considered low, as his computation is based on a workforce of 50 slaves, when most engenhos probably had in the vicinity of 100. A pão is equivalent to 3 - 4 arrobas. See Schwartz and Barrett, "Two Colonial Sugar Economies," pp. 11-12; Pinto de Aguiar, Aspectos, pp. 36-37.

absence, she had taken a lover, the episcopal canon and godfather to their daughter, José da Silva Freire. To facilitate his visitations, a trap door and a special path had been prepared by the mistress' slaves. Ultimately, the betrayed husband had the adulterous canon tried but he escaped punishment by packing the jury with his cronies. Five years later, the cleric was again brought to court, where even the testimony of slaves was permitted in the deposition. At this time he received a light sentence of a year's exile in Ilheus. The errant wife was returned to her father, and the long-suffering Jacinto had won at least a partial revenge. The accounts of this trial reveal that in 1789, ten years after his last urgent correspondence with the Destêrro, while he had rid himself of his wife, Jacinto was still in possession of his engenho.[74]

The convent resorted frequently to court writs to compel debtors to pay up. To initiate proceedings, the convent applied to the High Court to present the debtor with a writ requiring that he liquidate his obligation. The nunnery instituted this procedure in the Relação (High Court) literally hundreds of times during the eighteenth century. Persons not lesser in magnitude than the Rocha Pitta's, the Garcia D'Ávila's and the Pires de Carvalho e Albuquerques were taken to court for distraint of debt. If the offender resisted the court order, the convent could then obtain judicial permission to attach the belongings of the debtor. Theoretically this meant that a certain portion of the property's income would accrue to the

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[74]Jacinto Tomas' critical domestic circumstances are revealed in AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls. 1ª sér. Cat., 11466-11469. (January 12, 1784), 13370-13371 (December 19, 1789; December 28, 1789).

nunnery. Finally, if this procedure failed to redress the financial balance, the convent was entitled to foreclose upon the debtor's estate.[75]

The litigation that occupied the nunnery in the eighteenth century suggests that restitution of debts was a far more complicated procedure than has been outlined above. In 1732 alone the nunnery had over twenty cases in the courts. For an isolated year in the following decade, the records demonstrate another twelve.[76] In the 1770's and the 1780's expenditures for legal measures were regular entries in the nunnery's accounts.[77] Court proceedings were costly, lengthy, complicated and frequently not to the ultimate benefit of the litigant. Because of the system of paying legal fees according to the number of transactions and persons involved, it was to the advantage of the various judges, notaries and scribes to prolong the litigation. Furthermore, a case of long duration could even aid the debtor if the value of the currency had declined since he contracted the debt.[78] Indicative of these protracted legal disputes, a suit against the Garcia D'Ávila family which had originated in 1747 remained in force until 1822, when the obligation was eventually divided among the various heirs of the original debtor.[79]

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[75]ASCD, Cxa. 1; Pastas 30, 35; Cxa. 2, Pasta 72,73.

[76]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pastas 56(I), 71.

[77]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 9804, 9809; ASCD, Livro de despesa, 1781-1805.

[78]Rodrigues de Brito, A economia, pp. 116-117.

[79]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pastas 53, 59(II).

Arduous as it was to secure compensation by legal means, any other effort was routinely fraught with additional complications. In the first place, debt collectors and officials could be easily bribed. Those sent to summon Manuel de Mello Travassos went twice and each time were persuaded to abandon their mission with the gift of a few coins. Furthermore, the debtor claimed that he had given the last convent attorney a slave named Germana and in return received the promise that his debt payments would for the present remain in abeyance.[80]

Secondly, those for whom bribery was inappropriate could choose the more direct course of flight. In 1774 the abbess appealed for a royal order on the grounds that not less than three leading debtors had escaped to the hinterlands of the Capitania of Sergipe del Rey where the absence of legal officials made it virtually impossible to bring them to justice.[81] One of these fugitives was Lourenço da Pina Cruz, whose debt was contracted in 1736. Although he had made partial payment in kind, the meagre earnings of his engenho apparently did not permit him to liquidate his financial obligations.[82] Another recalcitrant in flight in 1774, Francisco Gomes Comacho, was still in possession of his engenho in 1779 when he pleaded with the conventual attorney not to make his debt public. Although the obligation dated from 1748, he contended that he had not been the actual borrower and had in fact

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[80] ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 29.

[81] ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 29, 35.

[82] ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pastas 53, 64; Caldas, Notícia geral, p. 437.

partially repaid the loan.[83]

Lastly, privileges accorded to the sugar growers impaired the nunnery's efforts at collection. A royal provision of 1663, revalidated in 1681 and extended in 1683 forbade foreclosures by creditors on the mill or any of its capital goods, including horses, oxen and slaves. According to law, therefore, only the produce of the engenho could be seized for distraint of debt. Moreover, planters were legally not obligated to allocate more than one-third of the engenho's income for restitution of their obligations.[84] Foreclosure could also be avoided by installment payment over an extended period, roughly twenty to thirty years. In this way, a debtor managed to retain his property in spite of his insolvency.[85] Although a portion of the nunnery's losses may indeed have been attributed to the protected and privileged position of the sugar planter, the nunnery's records indicate that even millowners whose debts were longstanding could be subject to prosecution and foreclosure. After the 1770's, perhaps owing to the effects of conventual administrative reform, the nunnery's interest in debt collection revived. The records indicate that renewed efforts met with considerable success. Debtors who contracted loans in the 1730's and 1740's were now brought to justice. Sugar planters, rather than remain exempt, appear with particular

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[83]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 19(II), 21.

[84]Rodrigues de Brito, A economia, pp. 110-112; Wanderley Pinho, História, pp. 181-182, 321-322; Schwartz, "Free Labor," pp. 186-187.

[85]Rodrigues de Brito, A economia, pp. 110-112; Pinto de Aguiar, Aspectos, 72-76.

prominence as the subjects of litigation. In such cases, initially the convent obtained a court order permitting the attachment of the crops as well as the possessions of the debtor. Thereafter, it appeared that if a considerable period of time elapsed, or the debtor died without redeeming his obligation, the property was subject to foreclosure. An alternative for the planter in debt to the convent was to forfeit his urban property.[86]

According to the convent's records, a number of estates (primarily cane-growing) were evaluated, forfeited and subsequently put up for auction by the convent. Such was the fate of the property of Diogo Pereira da Silva, whose land had been appropriated from his heirs. He had originally transacted a loan for which he offered as collateral "a few tarefas of sugar cane, a piece of land and a large canoe."[87] The convent sequestered some rural residential units located in the parish of Jagoaripe when it foreclosed upon the property then in the possession of the widow of Captain Bento de Britto in the 1770's. Apparently this action did not satisfy the debt, as shortly thereafter, the nunnery also appropriated the widow's fazenda, Batatãn, in the same locality.[88] If the debt were of sufficient duration or amount, even engenho lands

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[86]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 50. See the case of Padre Alvarenga, supra, fn. 69.

[87]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 19(II); Cxa. 2, Pasta 63.

[88]APB, Notas, CXIIX, fols. 229-231; CXXII, fols. 361-363; See also ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 71 for a list of judicial proceedings, and APB, Notas, LXXXII, fols. 69-71, for details of one of the cases listed.

were not immune to seizure. In 1774 the nunnery appropriated the fazenda of Macáu (belonging to the engenho of Asumpção) now in the hands of the heir of João Lopes Ferreira, whose property had been attached for the amount of 1,000,000 reis.[89] Several years later the convent initiated proceedings for the sequestration of the engenho belonging to Francisco Gomes Camacho, whose debt originated in 1748.[90]

Not only rural but urban properties were attached and forfeited during this period. In 1776 a court verdict decreed that the income generated from the houses belonging to Bento Maciel Teixeira was to go to the Destêrro, and that within twenty-four hours the tenants were to pay their rental to their new landlord.[91] Moreover, after a similar period of attachment the property of the widow of the late moedeiro (official of the Mint) was sequestered.[92]

The debtor had one final weapon he could employ against these measures of the creditor. Before yielding his property to foreclosure, it was necessary that it be evaluated to ascertain its value. It was alleged by contemporaries that bribery of the appraising officials, with the aim of inflating the value of the property, was commonplace. Hence, a good deal of sequestered real estate was no doubt acquired at inflated values. Unfortunately for the case of the Destêrro, the

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[89]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 57.

[90]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 63(II).

[91]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 73 (July 20, 1776).

[92]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 53.

evidence is insubstantial on this point.[93]

Balance Sheet

In view of the analysis of the loan structure of the convent, what can be said of the general relations between debtor and creditor? Was the planter-debtor exclusively at the mercy of the arbitrary whims of an unbending, voracious merchant-creditor? The planter's need for capital to sustain his agriculture did make it virtually inevitable for him to seek loans; on the other hand, the convent, as a lender, was obviously in control of the financial resources available. There were, however, a number of factors modifying and complicating this apparent relationship of superior and subordinate.

It has been suggested that the debtor could choose from a variety of lending sources.[94] The Misericórdia, the convents, the orders (lay and religious), and individual merchants all placed capital on loan. The choice, however, was perhaps more apparent than real. In the first place, low interest rates decreed by the crown for the benefit of agriculture had the effect of discouraging lenders. According to one contemporary, most wealthy individuals preferred other avenues of investment because they promised higher and more secure returns. Some even deposited their money in American or British banks rather than lend it. The likelihood of greater and

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[93]Rodrigues de Brito, A economia, pp. 110-112; Wanderley Pinho, História, p. 322; Pinto de Aguiar, Aspectos, pp. 34-35.

[94]Kennedy, "Bahian Elites," p. 434.

more stable yields elsewhere resulted in a small and limited credit establishment whose supply of funds scarcely equalled the demand for them.[95] Secondly, high risks and low returns resulted in discriminatory lending policies. The Destêrro, for example, distinctly favored either the established and powerful landowner, or those with relatives within the convent. It is not unlikely that other lenders may have subscribed to similarly selective policies. Thirdly, in order to secure a loan, a substantial piece of property had to be provided for collateral -- generally the entire estate. Therefore, unless the borrower owned more than one engenho, several urban residences, or had additional rural holdings, it was difficult for him to secure more than one loan. And although violations no doubt occurred, owing to the absence of a central register for mortgages, each borrower was generally committed to one major creditor.[96]

In spite of these disadvantages for the borrower, the relationship was not entirely one of the debtor's subordination to the creditor. Much depended upon the source of the loan. Probably, those planters who could not arrange to borrow elsewhere, secured loans from a factor who agreed to buy his sugar and furnish him with slaves and imported goods in return. In such cases, if unscrupulous, the individual merchant could buy the produce at less than its market value, and supply the imports at inflated prices. Or, alternatively,

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[95]Wanderley Pinho, História, p. 310; Rodrigues de Brito, A economia, pp. 104-107.

[96]Rodrigues de Brito, A economia, pp. 107-108.

he could lend at exorbitantly high interest rates.[97] Borrowing from an institution such as the Destêrro was probably the optimal arrangement a planter could make. In the first place, it involved the least obligation. In exchange for a supply of cash, no more than a mortgage on one's property was required. It was a single transaction which neither compromised the planter's sales nor his purchases. Secondly, the debtor was further assured of an interest at the established rate, and that he was dealing with a reputable creditor.

In the case of the Destêrro, the historical relationship of lender to borrower cannot be characterised as a chronicle of exploitation. One contemporary argued that the commercial sector was actually dependent upon the agricultural because the capital investment in sugar exceeded that in financing and shipping.[98] Others, of course, contended the reverse, claiming that greater prosperity regularly signalled larger profits for the merchants at the expense of the planter.[99] Although not measurable in any quantifiable way, it is evident that the Destêrro had more success in collecting loans, exacting repayment, attaching and even appropriating property during the late eighteenth-century period of economic recovery. For most of the century, however, for reasons which are obscure, little action was taken in spite of mounting unpaid debts. Perhaps the convent was discouraged in its collection by having to

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[97]Silva Lisboa, "Carta...," p. 501.

[98]Pinto de Aguiar, Aspectos, pp. 76-79.

[99]Silva Lisboa, "Carta...," p. 501.

deal with a legally privileged sector, for the credit structure did to some extent favor the landowner. First, low interest rates faciliated, at least theoretically, his repayment of loans. Secondly, protective legislation inhibited foreclosure upon the original debtor, and further aided even the bankrupt sugar planter in retaining his lands. Finally, intangible factors, such as the social prestige and influence of the mill-owner, may have impaired the convent's ability to achieve repayment.

Ultimately, both the debtor and the lender, such as the Destêrro, were victims of the vicissitudes of plantation agriculture. While the planter was dependent upon his source of credit, the Destêrro was reliant for its income on the repayment of loans. When faced with default the convent encountered great difficulty in exacting restitution from the sugar growers, who comprised the majority of its debtors. At best, the funds were restored to the conventual treasury only after a generation had passed and a plethora of courtsuits had consumed its attentions and financial resources. Having learned from experience, the nunnery turned progressively away from lending and diverted its capital to investment in real estate.

VI THE ECONOMIC ROLE OF THE CONVENT: REAL ESTATE

> ". . . The houses belong to the convents and other corporations of mão morta who are not embarrassed . . . to derive their income from these miserable shacks . . . ."
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> ----AHU, Bahia, Papeis avulsos, 1ª série catalogada, 19689 (February 8, 1799).

Extent of conventual holdings

The Destêrro Convent had a substantial portion of its capital invested in real estate. While the cash value of conventual property in the eighteenth century always remained secondary to that allocated to loans, the numbers of dwellings owned and administered by the nunnery made it one of Bahia's most powerful landowners. In 1778 the Destêrro's property was valued at 46,559,766 reis. It consisted of 80 urban residences, two pieces of land and one fazenda in the Recôncavo, all of which annually provided 2,478,320 reis for the community.[1] There can be no doubt that among convents it was the leading landlord. Of the three additional nunneries,

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[1] AHU, Bahia, Papeis avulsos, 1ª série catalogada, 9808 (November 22, 1778).

only the House of Mercês had earnings from property comparable to the Destêrro's. In 1764 the archbishop reported that the Clarissas possessed 65 houses generating an income of 1,342,650 reis. He also mentioned that the Convent of Mercês owned 40 houses renting for a total of 1,061,720 reis.[2]

By comparison to the holdings of the brotherhoods and lay orders in Bahia, it appears that only the properties of the Third Order of Carmelites approached those of the Destêrro. One 1853 compilation lists 91 holdings of the monastery of Carmo. Of these, 34 were definitely in the order's possession prior to 1764.[3] In 1859, the Destêrro registered 104 properties.[4] By comparison, in 1855 the monks of Santa Teresa listed 53 properties.[5] Russell-Wood does not reveal the extent of the Misericórdia's holdings. He does, however, state that the brotherhood abandoned its preference for landholding in the mid-seventeenth century and diverted

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[2]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6554-6555 (June 30, 1764).

[3]Tombo dos bens das ordens terceiras (? vols., Salvador, 1948), VI, 5-22.

[4]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 65(II).

[5]Valentin Calderón, Biografia de um monumento: O antigo Convento de Santa Teresa da Bahia (Salvador, 1970), Appendix V. For the Third Order of São Francisco, see Marieta Alves, História da Venerável Ordem Terceira do Seráfico Padre São Francisco . . . (Salvador, 1948), pp. 28-29.

its resources to money-lending.[6]

Acquisition of property

There were several ways religious corporations, brotherhoods and lay orders acquired real estate. First among them was the receipt of donations and legacies, generally prompted by religiosity, goodwill or the hope of securing the salvation of the giver. Of course, not all bequests were in real estate. Women frequently gave jewels, particularly for the decoration of the convent's array of saints. On the other hand, testators of both sexes left cash for the purpose of augmenting the nunnery's coffers or financing its construction. Madre Catherina de Monte Sinái donated a combination of silver items, slaves and cash valued at the impressive sum of 2,340,000 reis. However, aside from gifts of cash, silver or jewels, many willed real estate to the nunnery's patrimony. D. Josefa Pitta de Conceição presented the sisters with two small sobrados (houses of several levels) and a térrea (single story dwelling), both located in the heart of the city.[7]

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[6] A.J.R. Russell-Wood, Fidalgos and Philanthropists: The Santa Casa da Misericórdia of Bahia, 1550-1755 (Berkeley, 1968), pp. 163-165.

[7] ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 19(II), 42, 44; Cxa. 2, Pasta 50; APB, Notas de escrituras, CXIV, fols. 75v-76v contains a contract for the annual celebration of a saint's day in return for a donation.

One form of donation was the *capella* or *legado pio*, a legacy which required the institution to say masses for the soul of the deceased in return for the gift.[8] The municipal council in the seventeenth century argued that the religious corporations acquired administrative title to many dwellings in this manner.[9] Ostensibly concerned with this tendency, the crown in 1764 and 1765 attempted to reinforce the laws restricting ecclesiastical property rights by prohibiting clerical institutions from becoming heir and benefactor by means of *legados pios*, *capellas* or *sufragios*.[10]

Whether the Crown successfully managed to restrict such practices, or whether they simply fell into disuse is not clear. Moreover, the significance of the pious legacy as a source of ecclesiastical holdings is likewise open to question. For instance, Russell-Wood records that charitable bequests of real estate in return for the saying of masses did not represent a major source of income for the Misericórdia after the 1660's.[11] Thereafter, most donations to the

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[8]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pastas 45, 60(I,II), 63(I,II), 66; for the administration of *capellas* by the Misericórdia, see Russell-Wood, *Fidalgos*, pp. 167-168.

[9]DHAMB, *Cartas de Senado* (5 vols., Salvador, 1951[?]--1953 [?]), I, 54-55; Calderón, *Biografia*, p. 31.

[10]Cesar Tripoli, *História do direito Brasileiro* (2 vols., São Paulo, 1936-47), I, 169-170.

[11]Russell-Wood, *Fidalgos*, pp. 163-165.

brotherhood took the form of cash gifts. By comparison, the available information about the third orders suggests that they continued to amass real estate through pious legacies well into the eighteenth century.[12] In the case of the Desterro, it appears that the practice of instituting a capella or legado pio was not a primary means of acquiring property in the eighteenth century. Most contributions pledged in return for masses consisted of small cash legacies from dying nuns.[13]

The Desterro also eventually acquired any property used to support the individual nun in her lifetime. A building's rental commonly provided such an annual income (tença). Normally, at the death of a nun, her property was automatically incorporated into the patrimony of the convent. In exceptional instances a nun could petition the archbishop to allow her estate to pass first to a sister, or another relative within the convent. Once the transfer was accomplished, the recipient could enjoy the right of usufruct until her death, whereupon the property reverted to the conventual patrimony. On her death-bed, the wealthy Madre Catherina de Monte Sinái appealed to have a portion of her property

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[12]For a list of properties of the lay orders and the religious brotherhoods and their mode of acquisition, see Tombo dos bens, VI.

[13]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 45; APB, Notas, LXXIX, fols. 263-265; Maria Isabel de Albuquerque, ed., "Convento do Desterro," AQCH (13 vols., Rio de Janeiro, 1950-1952), VIII (1951), 429-430.

ceded to her two sisters, both nuns in the convent. In accordance with this arrangement, the convent inherited four dwellings whose annual rental yielded the considerable sum of 108,900 reis. Her sisters, during their lifetimes would each receive approximately 25,000 reis from their newly acquired properties.[14]

Moreover, inheritance practices sometimes benefitted the community. If the nun had been designated as heiress to an estate, the property was incorporated into the patrimony of the convent. Probably one of the largest legacies received by the Desterro was that of the daughters of Francisco de Brito e Sampaio. This holding, willed to his children in the Desterro, consisted of substantial urban dwellings, four pieces of land, a part ownership of an engenho, and some cane fields, together worth over 4,000,000 reis.[15] However, such massive bequests to the Desterro were apparently rare. Perhaps they were more common among the male orders. One contemporary claimed that the tendency of certain families to place several children in the orders led to immense resources falling to the religious corporations, causing indescrible harm to the State . . . .[16]

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[14]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 33, 44; Cxa. 2, Pastas 50, 53(II).

[15]Albuquerque, "Convento," AQCH, VIII (1951), 429-430.

[16]Luis dos Santos Vilhena, A Bahia no século XVIII (3 vols., Salvador, 1969), I, 274.

Another means of obtaining real estate was through foreclosure proceedings. Debtors sometimes sold their inheritance rights to the Desterro in exchange for the liquidation of their debt. The widow of the millowner Antônio Gonçalves de Rocha sold the inheritance of her daughters, both nuns, to the convent to cover the debts her husband had incurred.[17] Similarly, other debtors sold property already heavily mortgaged to the convent for the purpose of obliterating their obligations. Rodrigo da Costa de Almeida, provedor da alfândega (customs' house manager) sold three stone houses to the convent in 1772 to settle his account.[18] Such transactions actually amounted to foreclosures, since under the circumstances the debtor had little leverage in the arrangements. Even the wealthy millowner, Balthazar Vasconcellos, turned over an engenho to the convent in order to cover his debts. In return, he received cash for the amount which the value of the mill exceeded that of the debt.[19] In many cases foreclosures upon the property of debtors were not executed until the death of the owner. At this time, the mortgaged estate was sold to the convent,

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[17] APB, Notas, LXXVII, fols. 91v-95v.

[18] APB, Notas, CXIV, fols. 70-71v; ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 35; Cxa. 2, Pasta 70(I).

[19] ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 30.

rather than passed to the heirs of the deceased.[20]

Moreover, the community additionally made outright purchases of real estate to increase its patrimony. The earliest acquisition made by the Desterro was in 1692, when it bought a few single-story dwellings in the vicinity of the convent for the purpose of accommodations. Interestingly, the seller was an illiterate slave and the transaction was accomplished by proxy.[21] While these houses were of modest value, desired primarily for their proximity, a number of dwellings both simple and substantial were purchased in the ensuing years of the eighteenth century. Particularly in the latter third of the 1700's, the convent appears to have increasingly invested in urban property. Conventual holdings between 1764 and 1778 grew from 65 to 80 urban houses. By 1859 the convent reported the ownership of 104 properties.[22] Whether such acquisitions reflected

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[20] Supra., Ch. 5; For a comparable situation in the Valley of Oaxaca, New Spain, see William B. Taylor, Landlord and Peasant in Colonial Oaxaca (Stanford, 1972), pp. 140-142. He suggests that non-entailed estates were more frequently sold than they were inherited.

[21] ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 2(I). Unfortunately, it is not known how the slave acquired the property. For other examples of seventeenth-century holdings, see Cxa. 2, Pastas 61, 62.

[22] AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6554-6555 (June 30, 1764), 9808 (November 22, 1778); ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pastas 50, 59(II), 65(II).

an increase in the value of Salvador's real estate, a growing stability in the prices of landholdings, or simply a new policy in the Destêrro's administration is not possible to say.

The nature of the Destêrro's holdings

Once title had been assumed, the task of administration began. The Destêrro did, in fact, come into possession of a variety of properties -- urban residential units, city lands, rural cattle and crop farms, and even sugar mills. What was the policy of the Destêrro regarding real estate: Did it retain all the property acquired? What was the nature and relative value of these possessions? Who were the tenants and ledgers in the nunnery's structures? Did economic power result in exploitation? The following discussion aims at providing at least partial answers to some of these questions.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century Bahia was a sprawling city of some five thousand homes. The principal square was embellished by the government buildings, the municipal council and the archepiscopal cathedral. A few of the major streets in the upper city were graced by elegant townhouses of several stories along the narrow and winding hillsides. However, most of the town's structures were one-story dwellings, earthen and mud hovels that attested to the poverty of their inhabitants. Travelers

like Mrs. Kindersley and Thomas Lindley found the appearance of Salvador disagreeable and verging on repugnant, in spite of its magnificent cliffs and gleaming bay.[23]

One royal official at the close of the eighteenth century attributed the haphazard, inequitable and unesthetic qualities of Salvador's housing directly to the policies of the church. Without mincing words, he characterized the religious corporations as slumlords, who say fit to profit from the misery of others. In his words, "the principal cause of this disorder is that the houses belong to the convents and other corporations of mão morta who are not embarrassed . . . to derive their income from these miserable shacks . . . ."[24] He further charged that administrative neglect and a reluctance to spend church funds on repairs were responsible for the horrendously dilapidated conditions of most urban homes. Because the clerical landlords neither initiated new construction nor sponsored improvements in existing buildings, residences remained largely of the single-story variety. Salvador therefore suffered both in its appearance and for the limited housing available.

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[23]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 19689; Thomas Lindley, Narrative of a Voyage to Brazil (London, 1805), p. 245-246; Kindersley, Mrs., Letters from the Island of Teneriffe, Brazil, The Cape of Good Hope . . . (London, 1777), pp. 33-35.

[24]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 19689.

Whether or not these allegations were motivated by a growing regalism, evidenced in a desire to curtail the wealth and power of ecclesiastical bodies, there was some truth to these charges. Most of the town's property was in fact not privately owned, but in the possession of institutions such as the municipal council, the brotherhoods or religious orders. Landholding patterns had indeed become so complex that it was conceivable to find one institution owning a house from which it collected rentals, situated on lands in the possession of another.[25]

The property of the Desterro was of several kinds: rural estates, rented urban residences, and leased urban lands. By far the majority of the nunnery's holdings consisted of one-story city dwellings, generally shabby mud-and-wattle huts, lacking in windows and covered only by simple thatched roofs. Less common were both the modest single-story houses made of limestone or the more substantial residences of several floors. (Appendix III)

Unfortunately, the property registers of the convent have survived only for isolated years prior to the 1770's. Records for the last quarter of the eighteenth century indicate that the tenants of the convent's urban structures were

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[25]The Desterro managed buildings located on property rented from the Convent of São Bento. See ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pastas 63(I, II), 65(I, II); Livro do tombo da prefeitura municipal (? vols., Salvador, 1953), I, 15.

indeed a varied lot, differing markedly in race, sex and occupation. Most ledgers inhabited the airless, dark and dingy shacks administered by the convent (casas terreas). Among them, white, mulatta and black single women appear with great frequency. Artisans, particularly shoemakers, black, white and of mixed-blood, masons, and soldiers likewise paid the monastic landlord their dues. Even gypsies appear on the convent's ledgers. Possibly several families shared the cramped quarters of one unit, while poor relations and others may have been accommodated as boarders. Conditions of housing for these sectors of the population in Bahia today conjure up images probably not very remote from their circumstances in eighteenth-century Salvador.

The appointment of a rent collector dated from the time of the Desterro's efforts at reform in the 1770's. Because of the high turnover among the tenants in these urban units, the task was a demanding one. After little more than a month in residence, many ledgers deserted their dwellings without payment of the rent. Tracking down these impoverished vagrants verged on the impossible. Furthermore, since they had few possessions, initiating proceedings of attachment could not yield compensation. In view of the limited recourse of the landlord, the omnipresence of the collector was probably the most effective means of securing rental fees. In spite of such efforts to exact payment,

no evictions appear to have resulted. This was most likely due to the costliness of obtaining such a court order, rather than to any compassion on the part of the nunnery. Moreover, in most cases, the apartments had been abandoned long before the convent could take legal action.[26]

The residents of the multi-storied dwellings (sobrados) had little in common socially with the lower-class occupants of the Desterro's ramshackle huts. Clerics, lawyers and bureaucrats rented the more substantial dwellings belonging to the convent. These structures were usually rented by the floor, since only the exceptionally wealthy man could afford to occupy an entire building. Each of the apartments within a building could command from five to ten times the rental of a single-story structure. In addition to dividing such larger homes into several residences, the ground floor was rented to a shopkeeper. Occupancy in these sobrados was generally more stable than in the casas terreas, and tenants frequently remained for five years or more.

To enforce the collection of rentals, the convent did employ the legal weapons at its disposal against the wealthier tenants. If such lodgers defaulted on their rent, the belongings of the debtor were attached and sold. The overdue rent of Joaquim José Cardoso apparently covering a period of more than fifteen years dating from 1777 was

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[26]The information regarding the inhabitants and patterns of residence is derived from ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 48; ASCD, Livro de receita, 1781-1880; ASCD, Livro dos alugueis, 1781-1811; ASCD, Livro de dispesa e receita, 1780-1814.

finally collected by foreclosure and the subsequent auction of some of his slaves in 1798. In spite of this legal battle, he remained in the residence until 1797.[27]

The scarcity of decent dwellings and the multiplicity of decrepit structures probably accounted for the high turnover among the poorer tenants as well as the low incidence of change among the wealthier occupants. In either case, apartments in the late eighteenth century were rarely vacant for more than a month. The facility with which the convent could rent its property fostered carelessness and a reluctance to maintain and repair its holdings. There is evidence that the convent indeed spent little per month in the upgrading and maintainance of its possessions. In the 1780's, as little as three and no more than thirty milreis out of an average monthly budget of 600 milreis was allocated for improvements in property.[28] Occasionally, if the tenant were prepared to undertake the construction himself, he could obtain a rebate on his rent. These policies sometimes resulted in acrimonious conflicts between tenant and landlord. In more than one instance, the Desterro refused to accept certain repairs in lieu of rental. One resident not only received no reduction in the rent but was also threatened with having his belongings attached.[29]

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[27]ASCD, Livro dos alugueis, 1781-1811, nos. 8, 9.

[28]ASCD, Livro de dispesa, 1781-1805; See also, AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 9804.

[29]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 27; ASCD, Livro de dispesa, 1781-1805.

In spite of the short supply of habitable residences, ntals paid to the convent appear to have remained re- rkably stable throughout the last quarter of the eighteenth ntury. For example, a store leased to the black woman sa Maria from 1775 to 1811 was maintained at the same dest rental of 3,840 reis during the entire period. The ilding's second story and another basement shop had rented for 5,520 reis annually since 1777.[30] Rental of a property has een calculated for the eighteenth century at approximately percent of its value.[31] Thus an annual rental of 50,000 o 80,000 reis for a sobrado of two stories with a store laced its value at between 1,000,000 and 2,000,000 reis in the 780's, or roughly .04 to .06 of the cost of an average ngenho.[32] (Appendix III)

The apparent stability of rents raises some questions. Increased interest in real estate and a rising number of sales and purchases in the late eighteenth century was likely te have exerted an upward pressure on the value of urban residences. Furthermore, in the face of rising costs of food,

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[30]ASCD, Livro dos alugueis, 1781-1811, nos. 3, 9.

[31]Asunción Lavrin, "The Feminine Orders in Colonial Mexico," (Paper presented at the American Historical Association Meeting, New Orleans, 1972), Table I.

[32]ASCD, Livro dos alugueis, 1781-1811; José da Silva Lisboa, "Carta . . . em que lhe dá notícia . . . sobre a Bahia," ABNRJ, XXXII (1914), p. 501; Pinto de Aguiar, Aspectos da economia colonial (Salvador, 1957), pp. 34-35. The price of an average engenho is based on estimates that range from 15,000,000 reis and 40,000,000 reis for engenhos with a workforce of 50 to 100 slaves.

slaves and imported goods, it is all the more surprising that rentals seem to have remained relatively unaltered. Admittedly, the entire subject of property values, both urban and rural, remains in the domain of future research.[33]

If rented lodgings provided a major source of income for the Desterro, they were not the sole urban component. Relatively small pieces of urban land of one to two braças in size were leased as well. Occasionally such lands either had houses built upon them or were leased with the provision that the tenant was required to construct a dwelling. In 1781, the convent notarized a lease of a strip of land to Nicolão Duarte. An earlier arrangement concerning the same holding had not taken effect because the tenant neither built any houses, nor paid his fees.[34] In general, however, the uses to which such properties were put and the conditions of their tenure remain somewhat elusive.

The convent's landholding patterns reveal a consistent preference for urban as opposed to rural properties. Unlike male orders such as the Benedictines,

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[33]See Katia M. de Queiros Mattoso, "Conjuncture et Societé au Bresil a la fin du XIII? Siecle," Cahiers des Ameriques Latines, 5 (1970).

[34]APB, Notas, CXXII, fols. 276-276v; See also ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 65 (II); APB, Notas, CXX, fols. 320v.

the Carmelites and the Jesuits, the Desterro actually resisted the acquisition of country estates.[35]

Reluctance to extend the convent's holdings much beyond the city's confines was probably born of the difficulties of administering such estates. By comparison to the male orders, who had the freedom of leaving their monastic retreats for their estates in the interior, the nuns had no recourse but to administer the property by proxy. In one case the sisters did make the effort to retain three cattle *fazendas* on the Rio São Francisco, willed to them by two daughters of a priest, one a nun, and the other a *recolhida*. Soon after the nunnery came into possession of the lands in 1790 it turned their administration over to two inhabitants of the region. These two were to supervise the cutting of the herds and the sale of the cattle in Salvador, as well as take charge of the employees, the slaves and the horses on the ranch. For at least thirteen years the convent maintained this arrangement. In 1803, the three properties, now totally devoid of slaves, were sold to Captain Luisanno Galo da França for the modest sum of 900,000 *reis*. Whether the decline in slaves was a consequence of maladministration and resulted in the *fazenda's* fall in value is impossible to say.[36]

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[35]Stuart B. Schwartz, "Free Labor in a Slave Economy: The *Lavradores de Cana* of Colonial Bahia," *Colonial Roots of Modern Brazil*, ed. Dauril Alden (Berkeley, 1973).

[36]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 59(I); APB, *Notas*, CXLVII, fols. 378r - 380.

Sale of conventual properties

Until recently little emphasis has been placed upon the sale of property by the church. It is now clear that the church not only acquired, but also divested itself of its holdings. William B. Taylor's study of the Valley of Oaxaca in Mexico has shown that twenty-five land sales were made by six orders in the region from 1610-1722.[37]

The Desterro Convent appears to have sold the rural property it acquired. The case of the lands of Francisco de Sá Peixoto provides one example. In 1731, owing to his indebtedness, some holdings of Sá Peixoto were appropriated by the convent. Nine years later, the debtor arranged an exchange of property with the nunnery. Finally, in 1746 the property retained by the Desterro in Cachoeira was then sold to Gaspar Araujo Pinto for 225,000 reis.[38] Such a policy of alienation was pursued regardless of whether the lands were pasture or even sugar properties. The portion of the engenho inherited from the legacy of Francisco de Brito de Sampaio was immediately put up for sale. Nor did the sugar

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[37]Taylor, Landlord and Peasant, pp. 186-194. Concerning church lands Charles Gibson wrote: "Such properties were held in legal mortmain. They could not be sold or subdivided and the process of ecclesiastical acquisition was thus one of steady accretion." Spain in America (New York, 1967), pp. 84-85.

[38]APB, Notas, LXXXII, fols. 69-71; Albuquerque, "Convento," AQCH, VIII (1949), 423; ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pastas 59(II), 72 (November 3, 1740).

mill acquired by foreclosure from Balthazar de Vasconcellos remain on the convent's ledgers.[39]

Finding a buyer was not always easy. The property known as the fazenda of Batantan, acquired from the heirs of the conventual debtor, Bento de Brito, illustrates the difficulties inherent in making a sale. The convent's attorney had found that none of the convents or monasteries, third orders or brotherhoods were interested in its acquisition. He attributed the lack of buyers to the fact that the lands had not yet been surveyed and measured. This, of course, meant that boundaries could not be guaranteed in the future and a prospective owner could antitipate conflict with his neighbors. In 1781, the sale was finally contracted with Paulo Amado Coutinho, at which time the exact dimensions of the land, 450 braças in width and one league in length were specified in the deed. It therefore appears that prior to relinquishing the estate, the convent had undertaken the task of surveying the property. Apart from furnishing the exact measurements, the nunnery offered the additional enticement of reasonable terms of purchase. Less than one-third (300,000 reis) of the asking price of 1,100,000 reis was required in downpayment. The remaining 800,000 reis were

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[39]Albuquerque, "Convento," AQCH, VIII (1951), 429; Notas, CXVII, fols. 323v-325; CXLVII, fols. 389-389v illustrate the possession and sale of other sugar lands; for Balthazar de Vasconcellos' debt and property, see Albuquerque, "Convento," AQCH, VIII (1951), ABCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 30; Cxa. 2, Pasta 64.

to be paid in annual installments of 200,000 *reis* at a rate of 5 percent interest.[40]

Another rural property acquired by foreclosure proceedings and subsequently sold was a *sobrado* located in the villa of Joaguaripe near the town of Nazaré in the *Recôncavo*. In his attempt to sell, the convent's attorney had received one bid, which he judged insufficient. When he transacted the sale, it was for the amount -- on paper -- of 400,000 *reis*. Although at the time no cash changed hands, the purchaser mortgaged all of his belongings including two dwellings, one of which was occupied by women engaged in making lace (a traditional craft still practiced today in the hinterlands of Salvador).[41]

Urban property was also disposed of if it suited the financial needs of the nunnery, but not with the same regularity as rural. Obligations of maintenance and repairs sometimes convinced the sisters that it was easier and more profitable to be the banker for rather than the landlord of the estate. One abbess became embroiled in a conflict which at its essence challenged the convent's right to fashion its financial policies. She demonstrated to her recalcitrant opponent that she could indedd drive a hard bargain. Caetano Maurício Machado, owner of a residence adjacent to one of

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[40]APB, *Notas*, CXXII, fols. 361-362; ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 21.

[41]APB, *Notas*, CXVIII, fols. 229-231; Cxa. 1, Pasta 21.

the convent's in Salvador's main square had been persistently frustrated in his attempts to purchase the nunnery's property. Playing on the apprehensions of the crown regarding church property, he petitioned the King alleging that the nuns had allowed the building to fall into shameless disrepair. In his view, the nuns had refused his reasonable offer of 1,200,000 reis, and his promise to assume past conventual expenditures for construction materials out of sheer obstinance.

Four years after his petition of 1791, Caetano had still received no satisfaction. Subsequently, in 1795, the abbess appealed for episcopal permission to sell the house to Manuel Francisco de Oliveira, the current occupant. Under the present circumstances, she urged that the sale of the property would ultimately benefit the nunnery far more than continued rental. In spite of some attempt at restoration, the residence had fallen into a dilapidated condition; the leather door needed replacement by a wooden one, and the window gratings required work as well. Since his offer was a decent one, the abbess advocated accepting the proposed purchase by cane grower Manuel Francisco. The 5,600,000 reis (1,600,000 down and the remainder in annual installments of 280,000 reis) was more than four times the amount proferred by the persistent Caetano. Further-

more, she contended that the time payments of 280,000 *reis* exceeded the present rental of 190,000 by 90,000 *reis* yearly. In the short run, with the additional income, the freedom from responsibility for maintenance, and the liberation from the demands of Caetano Maurício, the convent would distinctly profit. The purchaser, Manuel Francisco, demonstrated forthwith that he owed no one money, that he had reliable guarantors and sufficient collateral of a sugar cane *fazenda* and the transaction was completed.[42]

Most land sales which were financed by the convent involved a down payment followdd by installments over a period of ten to twenty years. Manuel Francisco, for example, had payments extended over a ten year span. Only the very rare wealthy entrepreneur like Frutuoso Vincente Vianna, one of Bahia's leading merchants, could afford an entire cash payment, and then only if the price was low.[43]

Royal efforts at limiting ecclesiastical holdings

Whether the convent divested itself of rural or urban holdings in compliance with royal legislation barring religious corporations from possessing unoccupied property, or whether it was more influenced by economic cycles and property values, is at present impossible to determine.

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[42]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 14962-14963; ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 37.

[43]APB, *Notas*, CXXVIIA, fols. 126A-128; for routine agreements covering the sale of urban property, see APB, *Notas*, CXIV, fols. 70-71v; CXVII, fols. 234v-236v; CXLIV, fols. 306-307.

What is certain is that the crown had made a concerted effort to reduce church propetty held in mortmain and had, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, begun a consistent policy of attempting to enforce the alienation of unused church lands. Far from unique, the Portuguese efforts had a parallel and possibly an inspiration in the measures of Charles III and Charles IV of Spain. Though aimed at a general curtailment of the economic power of the Church, both the Spanish and the Portuguese policies similarly affected nunneries.[44]

Royal concern with church properties in the colony was not a novelty, and dated back at least to the seventeenth century. In 1691 the Crown had ordered the sequestration of ecclesiastical holdings maintained without royal license.[45] Subsequently, much correspondence dealing with the properties of the religious corporations can be found in the Bahian archives. Disputes between clerical and lay parties over contested boundaries of rural estates

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[44]For the Spanish measures, including imposts on property held in mortmain, enforced sales of estates and taxation of income and dowries, see Asunción Lavrin, "The Role of Nunneries in the Economy of New Spain," HAHR, 46:4 (November, 1966), 388-391.

[45]Inácio Accioli de Cerqueira e Silva, Memórias históricas e politicas da . . . Bahia, ed. Braz do Amaral (6 vols., Salvador, 1919-1940), II, 285-286.

were frequently brought to the attention of the crown.[46] However, regalist efforts at delimiting ecclesiastical holdings seem to have climaxed under the ministry of Sebastiao José de Carvalho e Melo, the Marquis of Pombal. His expulsion of the Jesuits is well-known. Moreover, laws restricting ecclesiastical holdings in mortmain were promulgated in 1758. Subsequently legislation in 1764 prohibited the orders from taking possession of lands through pious legacies. A new round of measures in 1768 forbade the further acquisition of property by ecclesiastical corporations by any means. The legislation moreover required the sale or rental of vacant estates to lay persons.[47] That these measures were only partially enforced or observed is apparent from the Desterro's accounts. They attest to a number of purchases of residential structures from the 1760's to the 1780's.[48] A second testimony to the limited success of these policies is the renewed vigor with which similar laws were pursued

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[46]APB, Ordens régias, XX, docs. 130, 132, 147; XXI, doc. 29; XXII, doc. 112.

[47]Tripoli, História, I, 169-170; AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 14962.

[48]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 50; AHU, Bahia Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6554-6555, 9808.

at the turn of the century.

D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho, one of the crown's ablest ministers, proposed a series of measures in 1798 for the administrative reform of the colony. Convinced that the Empire's core had shifted from Portugal to Brazil, he planned to restructure the colonial bureaucracy, the court system and the treasury.[49] An extensive investigation directed at the holdings of the Church was conducted. The inquiry disclosed that the lay orders as well as the convents and monasteries possessed extensive holdings.[50] The report of February, 1799 urged the sale of properties in the hands of the brotherhoods, lay and religious orders. It was suggested that even the real estate administered by convents for the support of the individual religious (tenças) be sold. The Royal Treasury was then to assume the responsibility for the payment of the monks' and nuns' allowances. Three months after the plan was proposed, the forced sale of ecclesiastical property was

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[49]Kenneth R. Maxwell, "The Generation of the 1790's and the Idea of Luso-Brazilian Empire," Colonial Roots of Modern Brazil, ed. Dauril Alden (Berkeley, 1973), pp. 137-138.

[50]Pinto de Aguiar, Bancos no Brasil colonial (Salvador, 1960), pp. 25-27, 75-92; Tombo dos bens; AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 19689.

decreed on May 19, 1799.[51]

Again the implementation of the latter degree appears to have been relaxed or obstructed. Subsequent efforts at legislation indicate that the Church continued to possess substantial real estate holdings. For example, a law of 1817 instituted a two and one-half percent tax on all property in the domain of the church bodies.[52] Moreover, investigations into ecclesiastical possessions similarly persisted. The Portuguese Cortes in 1822 passed a resolution, confirmed by Pedro I in Brazil, requiring all convents and monasteries to submit a report outlining the state of their orders. They were asked to provide information concerning the size of the community, the religious functions performed, its earnings and kinds of products, the capacity and condition of the convent, and lastly, the extent and physical state of its property.[53] The unresolved task of reducing the

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[51]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., no. 19689; AN, Cxa. 725, Pac. 1:55, no. 528; Pinto de Aguiar, Bancos, pp. 25-27.

[52]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 65(II).

[53]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 49, Cxa. 2. This legislation no doubt signified a substantial increase in pressure, since it was the product of a liberal semi-revolutionary government.

economic power of the Church was therefore a colonial legacy which eventually fell into the domain of the Brazilian Emperor.

Fragmentary and inconclusive as the evidence remains, several facets of the Destêrro's landholding policies deserve reiteration. Although real estate was acquired in a number of ways, one important means of obtaining property (aside from donations) was that of foreclosure. Conventual acquisitions were therefore closely tied to the practice of money-lending. The Destêrro apparently appropriated mortgaged holdings only at the death of the debtor, and prior to the division of the property among the heirs of the deceased. This raises many questions regarding the handling of non-entailed estates. Most basic -- to what extent was the practice of primogeniture or entailment observed in the face of evidence suggesting that land divisions and sales were commonplace? Stated in yet another way -- how often were estates sold, divided or allowed to fall into the hands of lending corporations such as the Church and the brotherhoods? Answers to these questions still await further research.

The Destêrro's holdings surpassed those of Bahia's convents, most of its brotherhoods, lay, and religious orders. The Clarissas' investments were concentrated largely in urban buildings, rented to both the upper and lower classes of Salvador. During the eighteenth century

the convent's urban holdings progressively increased. However, not all property acquired by the nunnery was retained. In every instance located, rural land was sold by the community. Interestingly, the Desterro's practices appear to parallel those of the orders in the Valley of Oaxaca. William B. Taylor's recent study of that region has pointed out that alienation of church properties was not uncommon.[54] Future research will no doubt reveal the extent to which church land holding practices in Brazil resembled or differed from those of Mexico.

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[54]Taylor, Landlord and Peasant, pp. 171-174.

VII REFORM OF THE DESTÉRRO CONVENT

> "The love of holy poverty and disdain of vanity lives exiled from this nunnery."
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> --AHU, Papeis avulsos, Bahia, 1ª série catalogada, 6554-6555.

In an age when wordly concerns as well as sacred motivated the taking of the tonsure, religious devotion remained an unrealizable goal in the religious orders. As in any profession, a share of liars, scoundrels and flawed souls found their way into the clerical establishment. Royal correspondence of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries contains many measures aimed at purging the clergy and the religious orders of offending members. The catalog of laws, provisions, investigations and decrees remains the best testimony to the difficulty of eradicating human weakness.[1]

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[1]Inácio Accioli de Cerqueira e Silva, Memórias históricas e políticas da . . . Bahia, ed. Braz do Amaral (6 vols., Salvador, 1919-1940), II, 258-259; DHBNRJ (120 vols., Rio de Janeiro, 1928 ff.), XC (1950), 98-99; XCV (1952), 225-227; XCVII (1952), 58-60, 98-101; BNRJ, Manuscritos, II-4, 23, 33; "Instrucão para o Marques de Valença, Governador . . .," ABNRJ, XXXII (1914), 438-439.

When D. Frei Manuel de Santa Inez, archbishop of Bahia, embarked upon his inquiry into the spiritual state of the religious orders, the results of his carefully conducted visita in 1756 both amazed and dismayed him. The Desterro Convent, shelter for the women of Bahia's finest families, emerged as the very "scandal of the city."[2] Before systematically attempting to uproot the abuses, in 1764 he therefore submitted to the crown a detailed report of the wrongdoings of the nuns. He urged the need for strong measures, contending that the extreme violations of the present were a consequence of episcopal laxity in the past. He found that most transgressing religious continued unpunished for their crimes and that, to that date, not a single nun had been expelled from the cloister, or had even been chastised for violations of any of her vows.[3] Previous archbishops had relied on a technique of inquiry which encouraged deception. Santa Inez, in an effort to test the methods of his predecessors, collected depositions from the nuns of the Desterro, inquiring about the reputed cloistral violations. His investigations confirmed his suspicions. As was the case with earlier episcopal probes, the eighty responses he received

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[2]AHU, Bahia, Papeis avulsos, 1ª sér. cat., 6554-6555.

[3]APB, Ordens régias, XXXIV, doc. 97, fols. 327-328.

revealed not a single shortcoming behind the convent walls.[4]

Visita of 1756

The archbishop's report is a fascinating portrayal of the Poor Clares -- according to his view -- at their most extreme disciplinary lassitude. Much of his description is worth recalling for its detail of conventual life. The daily patterns of monastic living in actuality bore little semblance to the Order's statutes requiring communal existence. It had become the practice for each of the Desterro's nuns to have her servant fetch her ration of meat, farinha or fish, which was then prepared in the privacy of the nun's own cell. Nor was the communal spirit much in evidence in the convent's celebration of the saints' days and commemorative rituals. Although known for its gala occasions, the order did not bear the financial responsibility of its costly and lavish processionals. Social pressures and concern for the familial reputation forced parents of nuns to shoulder the burdens of the Desterro's pompous ceremonials. Decrying these outrageous excesses, the prelate probably unintentionally punned when he complained

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[4]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6554-6555. The uniformity of the responses to the archepiscopal inquiry seems to suggest a collective awareness stronger than their vows among the nuns. An alternative explanation would be that the few dissenters were intimidated by the majority.

that "all of this expense and extravagance is clear demonstration that the love of holy poverty and disdain of vanity lives exiled [desterrado] from this nunnery."[5]

While public displays called for extensive and costly preparation, routine conventual rites were poorly attended. Although participation in the choir was obligatory for the entire community, a majority of the nuns absented themselves from such celebration of the canonical hours. Some even went so far as to refuse to learn the ceremony in order to remain exempt. Breaches of conventual observance marred even the celebration of Christmas and other high holy days. The singing of popular tunes followed on the heels of a few perfunctory hymns and continued until the hour assigned for lessons had passed. On one yuletide Mass, witnessed by a French observer, the nuns presented an evening's entertainment consisting of a comic farce followed by some ribald melodies.[6]

Immodesty, arrogance, and even profanity characterized more than the convent's public exercises. The most flagrantly abused vow among many was that of poverty. Far from earning esteem for their piety, the sisters of the Destêrro gained notoriety for their vanity and disregard for their sacred promises. Archbishop Santa Inez lamented

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[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid., Le Gentil de la Barbinais, Nouveau voyage autour du monde (3 vols., Paris, 1728-1729), II, pp. 206-207.

that "poverty for them is virtually an uncomprehended language."[7] As fashion-conscious as her secular peer, the Poor Clare donned a monastic garb in keeping with the current style. Reluctant to cover her head with the usual veils, she left much of her neck and shoulders exposed. Ribbons of bright and appealing colors and sleeves of extraordinary fullness embellished the nuns' habits. Openings in the front and back of their vestments frequently revealed billowy undergarments embroidered in the most elaborate manner. Sandals, jewelry of gold and diamonds, and pearl-white silk hose supported by gem-studded garters were worn on special occasions. Hair coloring, rouge and face powder moreover concealed gray tinges of the hair and skin.[8]

Social convention as well as vanity encouraged the use of many slaves. The archbishop regarded the vast numbers of servants and domestic slaves as a cause for alarm. Discord among nuns was prevalent to the point that the sisters took up the disputes of their domestics. Scandals leaked from within the convent walls by the comings and goings of the nuns' retainers. For a slave, service rendered for a Clarissa was regarded as a privilege. In keeping

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[7]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 11464.

[8]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6556.

with the emphasis on public display so characteristic of the nunnery, one young slave was initiated into the convent by being paraded -- sumptuously dressed -- about the city in a sedan chair. When after several days this ritual drew to a close, she was met at the nunnery's gates by the entire community, where she was admitted with elaborate ceremony.[9]

Reform efforts; laxity of discipline

Archbishop Santa Inez and his successors assumed the task of reforming the Poor Clares. In the 1760's measures were aimed at revamping both the spiritual and temporal administration of the nunnery. Restoration of internal discipline was to be achieved through limitation of the Desterro's population and stricter controls on its behavior. In 1764 a royal ban prohibited further admissions to the novitiate of any order. Transfers from the white to the black veil were likewise forbidden. With entrants thus barred, natural attrition produced a decline from 95 nuns in 1764 to 77 in 1778. Only 64 remained by 1785.[10]

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[9] Ibid.

[10] ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 29; Cxa. 2, Pasta 75; Livro das entradas e profissões, fol. 105; AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6554-6555, 7755-7758, 7198, 9807, 9810, 11947; Pinto de Aguiar, ed., Aspectos da economia colonial (Salvador, 1957), pp. 24-25.

Reducing the numbers of religious alone did not solve the problems of decorum. At least part of the difficulties lay in the excessive numbers of secular inhabitants. Unlike the convents of Lapa and Mercês, the Desterro had no separate accommodations for its educandas, the conventual wards. Because of the inadequate facilities, pupils were dispersed throughout the nunnery, a practice which made their supervision all but impossible. According to the despairing prelate, "far from educating themselves as they ought, they act as the ruin of many religious."[11] He even feared that residence in the convent would corrupt rather than edify.

Firm efforts were therefore undertaken to restrict the size and freedom of the secular population. After the 1760's the financial and familial circumstances of every secular applicant were carefully scrutinized.[12] If a petitioner had at least one living parent she was considered inadmissible. Moreover, a few educandas met with expulsion for their wrongdoings. One convent-ward was expelled for maintaining illicit communications with a friar. The girl was returned to her parents' home and the cleric exiled to a remote mission in the interior. In spite of these

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[11]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 12142, 19194.

[12]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 18423-18424, 19194.

precautions, the archbishop believed the correspondence had not abated. Following this incident, another educanda asked to leave the nunnery so as to continue to share the company of her ejected friend.[13] Even more serious was the case of the pupil who married while residing in the convent. With the help of a nun, the educanda fled to the public notary to secure legal sanction for her action. Although the girl actually returned to the convent (claiming she had been mistaken), her father filed suit against the nunnery. The outcome of the proceedings, however, remains unknown.[14]

Bizarre and amorous exploits were not the exclusive domain of the seculars. Many of the religious were likewise notorious for their romantic inclinations. In keeping with well-established Iberian tradition, a number of nuns had amorous relationships with men, dubbed freiráticos for their clerical preferences.[15] The French traveler, La Barbinais, recounts that the viceroy's nephew himself carried on a flirtation with a Clarissa, who, when she discovered that

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[13] AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 12142.

[14] AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 11947.

[15] Fernando Castelo-Branco, Lisboa seiscentista (Lisbon, 1957), pp. 101-107; Luis dos Santos Vilhena, A Bahia no século XVIII (3 vols., Salvador, 1969), II, 468.

she had competitors, created a public scene during the Christmas services.[16] Far more incriminating evidence of the nuns activities in this realm was the new-born infant deposited on the steps of the Misericórdia one July morning. A note attached to the swaddling explained that the child was flushed from the tonics taken to prevent his birth and that he was the product of a clerical union.[17]

Whether or not such extreme intimacy was a commonplace, we do know that entry into the convent -- even into the cloister -- required little in the way of credentials. The nunnery's doors admitted virtually all who requested entrance. At the convent's gates, where artisans, clerics, tradesmen and servants congregated, embraces were exchanged scandalously and the grilles were opened to whomever desired a conversation. Each in his own fashion, both the archbishop and the satirical poet Gregório de Matos describe the bevy of visitors gathered about the portals of the Desterro ostensibly to sample the sweet confections prepared by the nuns. Moreover, one poem of the latter's is devoted to the discovery of a carpenter

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[16] Le Gentil de la Barbinais, Nouveau voyage, III, pp. 209-210.

[17] A.J.R. Russell-Wood, Fidalgos and Philanthropists: The Santa Casa da Misericórdia of Bahia (Berkeley, 1968), p. 312.

in a sister's cell.[18]

Evidence that such compromising situations were not the fanciful creations of the poet abounds in the royal and episcopal reform edicts issued from the late seventeenth to the eighteenth centuries.[19] Going beyond the action of his predecessors, Archbishop Santa Inez attempted to restore internal discipline by tightening his surveillance. He ordered that his pastoral and visita be read to the religious three times a year to remind them of their obligations. The doorkeepers, now under threat of excommunication, were forbidden to admit children, servants or workmen from the outside. Furthermore, no one other than the chaplain and the sacristan was allowed in the cloister. He additionally restricted visitors by requiring that the nunnery door be closed at all times, and that conversations with relatives beyond the second degree of consanguinity be prohibited.[20]

The attire and lifestyle of the nuns was also the subject of his reform efforts. Santa Inez insisted that all religious dress uniformly, and that they refrain from

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[18]Gregório de Matos, Obras completas (6 vols., São Paulo, 1945), II, 289-291, 306-307; AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6556.

[19]Accioli-Amaral, Memórias históricas, II, 258; V, 488-495; APB, Ordens régias, I, docs. 70, 75; XXXIV, doc. 97, fols. 327-328; DHBNRJ, IXC (1950), 186-187; XCV (1952), 246-247, 249; BNRJ, Manuscritos, II-33, 34, 9.

[20]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6556.

having trains or elaborate sleeves embellish their garments. The use of gold, diamonds and jewels was likewise prohibited. Such ornaments were either to be returned to their owners, or if they belonged to the nuns, were to be sold and the proceeds used to support conventual functions. He also decreed that the convent, (in lieu of the nuns' parents and relatives), was to assume the expenses of feast days, wakes and processionals. Meals were to be cooked and eaten communally in the dining hall. Observance of conventual rituals was ordered. Rather than the handful of nuns who maintained the choir, the entire community was required to attend. Not even the officers were permitted the use of substitutes. Ignorance of the music was rejected as an excuse for absence, as all the religious were now required to learn the services.[21]

In spite of the threat of dire penalties of excommunication or expulsion, Santa Inez' efforts had little immediate success. Like those of his predecessors many of his statutes went unheeded. More than a generation elapsed before his measures had any visible effects, and even by the mid 1780's the new prelate complained that he still found the spiritual state of the Desterro seriously wanting. A number of measures such as the restriction of visitors required reiteration. Archbishop Antônio Borgaz Leal decreed in April of 1786 that "no woman of any quality

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[21] Ibid.

may take one step within the convent with the exception of the governor's wife . . . ."[22] That not only women, children and servants, but also artisans, tradesmen, and physicians continued to frequent the Destêrro is borne out in the consistent legislative efforts of subsequent archbishops.[23]

Attempts to restore proper decorum in the Destêrro eventually culminated in the reassertion of episcopal control through the appointment of the abbess. Since the mother superior was the main figure responsible for the spiritual condition of the nunnery, it was essential that she be not only competent, but also willing to implement episcopal policy. On occasion in the past, the abbess had been chosen on grounds other than her religious virtues or administrative ability. The election of 1723 prompted a royal inquiry after certain influential townsmen had solicited votes among the nuns in order to secure an abbess sympathetic to their needs.[24] On other occasions prior to 1786, the archbishop had intervened to decide the outcome of conventual elections only when the vote

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[22]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 29; See also, Cxa. 1, Pasta 39, for the edict of 1764 banning entry; AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 11563-11564, 12911, 13030, 14917, 15209, 15293.

[23]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 39, 40.

[24]APB, Ordens régias, XIX, docs. 19, 19a; Santos Vilhena, A Bahia, II, 467-468.

had been tied.[25] In that year the prelate learned from concerned parents of the nuns that the abbess-elect would jeopardize any of the progress in the reforms. The laxity of Catherina dos Anjos -- owing to her advanced age -- was already well-known. She herself had not been to choir in twelve years. According to the archbishop the offenders already anticipated her tenure to the point that their servants were "prepared withnnew dresses and dances for the day of the celebration."[26] Archbishop Antônio Correa therefore sought and obtained royal and papal permission to appoint an appropriate abbess.[27] Once again in 1782, the prelate was empowered to determine the convent's leadership in order to prevent backsliding among its inhabitants. He alleged that the abbess who had been elected by the community failed to inspire his trust because she had already promised the servants greater liberties.[28] By the close of the century, the task of reform

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[25]ASCD, Livro das eleições, fols. 7-7v.

[26]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 12215.

[27]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 11947, 12215; ASCD, Livro das eleições, fols. 58-58v, 76.

[28]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 12911, 13030, 13233, 15917, 15209, 15252.

still lay incomplete. In 1799 the archbishop wrote to the King requesting permission to appoint the abbess of the Destêrro.[29]

Reform efforts: conventual administration

While the spiritual state of the convent was slow to alter, reform of its temporal affairs was less trying. The effort to streamline the Destêrro's accounts reflects the increased interest in professionalization and improved methods of administration characteristic of the later eighteenth century.[30] In 1774 the archbishop ordered a major reform of the Destêrro's ledgers. According to him, conventual maladministration had reached the point of "total ruin."[31] Loans were extended routinely without requiring sufficient collateral. Favoritism, rather than the borrower's ability to repay, had consistently guided the convent's lending policy. As a consequence, vast amounts were lost to the treasury through the failure to collect obligations from the heirs of the debtors. By 1764 fifty-one debtors had died owing the convent the formidable sum of 33,436,067 reis.[32] To remedy this situation,

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[29]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 19536 (November 4, 1799).

[30]Dauril Alden, Royal Government in Colonial Brazil (Berkeley, 1968), pp. 25-26, 280-281, 287-298, 430-434; John N. Kennedy, "Bahian Elites, 1750-1822," Hispanic American Historical Review, 43:3 (August, 1973), 427-428.

[31]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 39.

[32]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6554-6555, 9805.

the archbishop created a bookkeeping division and appointed a merchant, a man conversant with financial records and ledgers, as general attorney for the nunnery. An office close to the convent was established to house the administration. Tasks were divided and appointees hired to fulfill specialized functions. One lawyer devoted himself to court cases, whereas another two collected rentals and loans. Salaries to conventual employees -- chaplain, sacristan, surgeon, doctors -- were paid by the newly established counting house.[33] Four years following the implementation of the reforms, the archbishop claimed that results were already forthcoming. At the close of the first supervisor's term in 1778, the prelate named a cleric, Padre Inácio Pinto de Almeida, who exceeded his predecessor in his administrative zeal. Like the merchant before him, the Padre maintained an assiduous correspondence with the collectors in the interior. Many of the debts hitherto considered unredeemable were collected through Padre Inácio's diligence. Moreover, loans were extended on more rational grounds and requirements of bondsmen and collateral were stiffened. Superfluous expenditures were eliminated, and in spite of the fact that feast days were now financially sponsored by the convent, the nunnery's income amply covered the needs of the community. Even the private incomes of the nuns.

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[33] ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 48.

fell under strict administrative control. Access to the tenca now required episcopal license.[34]

Reform efforts: The servile population

The disorders in the Desterro were doubtless a product of many circumstances. Insufficient religious motivation, episcopal neglect and the domination of conventual positions by the socially outstanding rather than the competent were a few of the factors responsible. When Archbishop Santa Inez' attempts at reform did not eliminate the problems, new approaches and new sources of disturbance were sought. Subsequently, in the 1770's the prelates singled out the excessive servile population of the Desterro as the root cause of the disciplinary lassitude and administrative confusion. All told, in 1775 the domestic hands in the convent numbered well over 300. Approximately forty of these were free women who entered into the service of the community for social and economic reasons, and who are discussed elsewhere. (Chapter 2). The remaining fell into two categories of laborers: those in the service of the nunnery and those owned privately by either educandas, recolhidas or nuns. Of these, in 1755, eight slaves belonged to the community, while 290 others owed their allegiance to private mistresses. Perhaps choosing to exaggerate in order to stress the

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[34]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6556, 9805.

urgency of the situation, the archbishop placed the number of slaves at 400 and claimed that several nuns, including the abbess, held as many as four or five personal attendants.[35]

Acquisition of slaves and servants

Indeed, acquisition of a personal slave was a perfunctory matter. Most conventual inhabitants, whether religious or secular, petitioned the archbishop to have not one, but two attendants in the cloister. Age and infirmity were the justifications supplied by the nuns in their claims for more than a single servant. The applicant had to agree to sustain the servant at her own cost as well as to provide a guarantor, in the event that her own income should prove inadequate. Witnesses were called to attest to the petitioner's need for the servant and to her ability to support her. In spite of such procedural bars and strictures, until the latter eighteenth century slaves entered the Desterro with little difficulty. Particularly during the 1740's and 1750's, during the great upsurge of admissions, virtually every novice secured one, if not two slaves to minister to her needs. If we are to give credence to these petitions, almost all were in a continual state of poor health and rapidly aging, assertions which were distinctly

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[35]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 8814 breaks down the population of the Desterro into its various components; for the estimate of 400 slave inhabitants, see AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 9805; ABNRJ, XXXII (1914), 438-439.

challenged by the evidence pointing to the long life-span of the average nun.[36]

Apart from the conventional channels of appeal, servants and slaves -- both communal and private -- were acquired by other means. One ordinary method of obtaining slaves was through donation from pious individuals. Such legacies were usually left with the hope of improving the donor's chances for salvation in the after life. However, on rare occasions, even the welfare of the slave might prompt a gift to the nuns. Francisco Gomes Rego, who donated two slaves to the community in 1729 and 1739, did so with the intention of "freeing them of the many sins that they would commit outside."[37] (Whether his intentions were realized remains a matter of conjecture.) Additionally, both individual nuns and the community alike received slaves through the donation of friends, and relatives. A third means of acquisition -- and by far the most common -- was the legacy of a slave inherited at the death of a religious. Although death-bed inventories reveal that slaves automatically became the property of the community at the passing of the owner, many nuns specifically willed their attendants into

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[36]For the innumerable petitions see ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 16(I,II), 17(I-III), 18(II-III), 35, as well as occasional appeals contained in Cxa. 1, Pastas 4, 6, 7, 14, 33, 37, 30; A good example of an appeal may be found in AHU, Bahia, Maço 83, doc. 90.

[37]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 28; See also, Cxa. 1, Pastas 2(II), 39.

the possession of other religious. When Madre Catarina de Monte Sinái died, she requested that one of her male slaves be given to each of her sisters. In another case, Custódia dos Anjos willed all seven of her slaves to the care of various nuns.[38] Moreover, even lay donors sometimes required that at the death of the original owner, the enslaved domestic should pass into the possession of another nun rather than fall to the community.[39] (Appendix IV)

Another regular means of acquiring slaves, both for the institution and for the individual religious, was through foreclosures. In spite of the protection accorded to the sugar sector preventing creditors from the sequestration of slaves and plantation equipment, such exemptions apparently did not extend beyond the lifetime of the original debtor. The documentation indeed indicates that the heirs to a mortgaged estate were either liable for repayment of obligations or subject to the forfeiture of their stocks. To cite one example: Coronel Luis de Vasconcellos had died indebted for over 200,000 reis to the prominent lending nun, Madre Antônia de Jesus. In 1727, she obtained a writ permitting her to take possession of the crioula Maria, who had long since been legally attached. Having evaluated the slave at 145,000 reis, she accepted the remainder of

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[38]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 2(II), 28; Cxa. 2, 60(I-III), Inventários.

[39]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 35.

the obligation in cash in lieu of the appropriation of two additional slaves of the heirs of the deceased.[40]

Characteristics of conventual servants and slaves

In spite of the copious literature devoted to the controversy concerning slavery in the Americas, little is known about the monastic slave population. This is all the more surprising when we consider that the Tannenbaum-Klein thesis suggests that the role of the Catholic Church was critical in distinguishing the nature of slavery in North and South America.[41] In neither work, however, was a survey of any segment of the ecclesiastical population made. By comparison, examination of a single clerical institution provides the opportunity of making such an investigation. From sources such as public notarial records and wills we can derive certain clues concerning the identities of the conventual captives, the nature of their work, their lifespan and their ability to gain their liberty.

The majority of the servile population of the Desterro

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[40]The details of this transaction are scattered in ASCD, Cxa. 1, among Pastas 5(I); Cxa. 2, Pastas 59(I), 71. For other foreclosure proceedings involving slaves, see Cxa. 1, Pastas, 14, 27.

[41]Frank Tannenbaum, Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas (New York, 1946); Herbert Klein, Slavery in the Americas: A Comparative Study of Virginia and Cuba (Chicago, 1967).

was employed in the performance of domestic tasks for individual nuns. Predominantly female, the private attendants of the sisters were responsible for the preparation of meals, the care of clothing and the fulfillment of their mistresses' daily needs. An occasional few were employed in commercial activities, such as the sale of sweets and confections prepared by the nuns. Most slaves entered the nunnery along with a young novice or educanda. Although most had served the family ofthe professant as domestics, they do not fit thepopularized conception of the "slave mammy." Instead, attendants seem to have been of roughly the same age or younger than their religious mistress. Having been admitted to the cloister at age ten or eleven, the typical domestic spent her lifetime in the nunnery in the service of her cloistered mistress.[42]

The racial origins of the slaves were remarkably diverse. Of a sample consisting of 72 slaves, 21 were identifiable as African. Another 11, described as "black," could possibly have had Africans among them. At the same time the notary classified 13 definitively as creoles. Adding to this, 17 labeled mulatas or pardas, and another 5 characterized as cabras, we have a total of 35 of 72 slaves who were likely to be Brazilian-born.[43] This relative

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[42] ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 6, 13, 16(I,II), 17(I), 18(II,III),33.

[43] The sample consists of 62 cartas de alforria from the Notas de escrituras, APB, LXX-CXLI, encompassing the years 1740-1810. I am extremely grateful to Professora Kátia M. de Queirós Mattoso for placing a large portion of this information at my disposal; additional information was derived from various donations, deeds of purchase, sale and attachment in ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 2(II), 5(I), 14, 28, 35, and Cxa. 2, Pastas 65(I), 71.

equality of numbers between Africans and creoles suggests that such domestic slaves undoubtedly fared better than fieldhands. Caneworkers were largely African in their origins, owning to their high rate of attrition and to the necessity of their frequent replacement. The composition of the conventual workforce, on the other hand, points to a lesser necessity of restocking the slave population with new arrivals.

Apart from the female slaves, a number of males contributed to the labor force of the Destêrro. Although some owed their allegiance to individual nuns or seculars, the majority of male retainers belonged to the community. It is likely that they were assigned to the repair of conventual property and to those tasks within the monastery which required physical strength or a special skill. Among the captives, one is listed as a mason, another as a shoemaker. A third was responsible for the care of the sacristy. Since the records of the convent indicate that children did sometimes remain with their mothers in captivity, it is conceivable that in lieu of being purchased, some of the Destêrro's masculine attendants were born into monastic servitude.[44]

Whether male or female, the convent's laboring inhabitants were not all slaves. Slave or freedman, they were, however, with few exceptions, identified as blacks or persons of some Negro ancestry. Many of these employees achieved

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[44]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pastas 60(I)-60(IV).

their freedom at the death of their original mistress, whereafter they were commended to the service of the convent or that of another religious or secular recluse. In some cases, when freedom was conferred upon a slave at an early age, the motive for placement in the care of the community was paternalism. Because of the hazards of exposure to small pox, tuberculosis, yellow fever, vitamin deficiencies and malnutrition, it was deemed safer for the youthful _liberta_ or _liberto_ to remain in custody of the nuns. In 1786, the convent listed some 41 salaried male laborers, who each received 130,000 _reis_, two measures of oil, two quarts of _farinha_ and two and a half pounds of meat (on days when meat was permitted to the community) per month.[45]

In criticism of the work of Gilberto Freyre, it has been proposed that domestic slaves have been among the most privileged in the slave population. There is indeed little doubt that the experience of a fieldhand and a domestic was very different. Like household slaves, the captives of the convent were probably better treated than fieldworkers. Robert Southey, relying upon Henry Koster for his information, wrote that monastic slaves were neither sold nor punished corporally. Furthermore, he suggested that an equality in numbers between the sexes fostered a high incidence of marriage. The quality of slave life is difficult to determine

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[45] APB, _Notas_, CXIV, fols. 133-134; AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 12104.

and was likely to vary with the individual mistress. Probably many of the enslaved were subjected to the childish whims of their mistresses and many suffered the consequences of cruel adolescent fantasies, tantrums or fickleness.[46]

Leaving aside the much debated question of treatment, let us examine some of the facets of the slave's existence within the cloister. Whether many captives married is still largely a matter of conjecture. Included in Madre Catarina de Monte Sinái's list of twelve slaves is one married couple.[47] Furthermore, assuming that church laws made matrimony a prerequisite, the presence of slave progeny listed among inventories of the nuns suggests that some slaves were legally married. However, the great disproportion between the sexes and the extreme preponderance of females implies that the frequency of legal unions was rather low.

The meaning of marriage under the circumstances of enslavement is an issue which eludes facile definition. If the sacrament of marriage was virtually unattainable

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[46]Gilberto Freyre, The Masters and the Slaves (New York, 1966), p. 369. Freyre suggests that Brazilian slavery was less harsh than that in the U.S. and that often the planters' slaves were virtually considered family members: "First of all, I would emphasize the prevailing mildness of the relations between masters and household slaves -- milder in Brazil, it may be, than in any other part of the Americas." Robert Southey, A History of Brazil (3 vols., London, 1817-1819), III, 780-781; Carlos Ott, Formação e evolução étnica da cidade do Salvador (2 vols., Salvador, 1955-1957), I, 62.

[47]ASCD, Exa. 2, Pasta 48.

to the slave, casual liaisons and romantic encounters were certainly possible even in bondage. The outraged archbishops have left ample testimony to the sexual conduct of the Desterro's slave population.[48]

The mere fact of sexual freedom did not, however, necessarily loosen the bonds of slavery upon the individual. Either because of their monetary or prestige value, or simply because of the services they rendered, slaves were liberated only reluctantly. For the individual nun her most valuable possession was her slave. Judging from the inventories filed shortly before the death of the religious, the accumulated belongings of a lifetime -- including gilded images of the saints, imported china, furniture and clothing -- did not approach the value of her slaves. In the case of one religious, her three elderly slaves totalled 100,000 _reis_, whereas her combined effects raised only 58,760 _reis_.[49]

Slave values were likely to have varied widely during the eighteenth century. One useful source of slave prices is the deeds of emancipation found in the Bahian public archive. If we can assume that the price paid for

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[48]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 11563; ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 39, 40.

[49]The notion that the slaves must have been sick or elderly is derived from the relative prices of other captives. In 1780, the 30-40,000 _reis_ that the slaves fetched on sale or liberation was far less than the average cost, probably close to 70-100,000 _reis_, of a female "piece". ASCD, Inventory of Maria Clara da Conceição, Cxa. 2, Pasta 47(III). See also, Inventory of Brites de Esperança, Cxa. 2, Pasta 60(I), Cxa. 2. (Appendix IV).

liberty was equivalent to the slave's replacement value, then some estimate of slave prices may be derived. It would appear that in the 1780's the price of a female domestic probably in or beyond adolescence ranged from 70,000 to 100,000 reis.[50] Considered within the framework of late eighteenth-century values, this sum is roughly equivalent to the annual rental of a two-story dwelling complete with its leased stores located in a fashionable distribt of town.[51] By contrast to the worth of a slave at the height of his or her working capacity, children and the elderly yielded little. During the same period in the latter eighteenth century the price commanded by youthful or aged captives rarely exceeded 20,000 reis.

Reform of the servant-slave population

The general practice among the Destêrro's boarders throughout the greater part of the eighteenth century was to transfer any slaves who survived their owners into the possession of the community or that of another individual. The alternatives, which occurred with far less frequency, were the manumission or sale of the slave. The consequence of this policy of retention of slaves was a continuous increase in the number of captives in relation to nuns.

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[50]The data is derived from a sample of 62 cartas de alforria and 10 deeds of sale, purchase or attachment, during the years 1740-1810. The range of prices suggests that in the period of the 1740's and 1750's, and once again in the 1790's slave values climbed. See also, Wanderley Pinho, História de Um engenho do Recôncavo (Rio de Janeiro, 1946), pp. 208-209; ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 71. See n. 43 for the volumes in the Notas de escritúras.

[51]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 14962-14963; ASCD, Livro dos alugueis, 1791-1811.

Just as episcopal pressure aimed to restrict the numbers of religious, clerical reform of the latter eighteenth century was also directed at a reduction of the Desterro's slave population. According to the prelate, the task of providing food and clothing for these dependents ultimately fell to the community and caused an excessive strain on the treasury. Even more critical was the prevalent misconduct and lapses in conventual decorum which he attributed to the large excess of servants and slaves. The overabundance of attendants indeed damaged the religious life "by the disturbance, and disorder that [derived] from this multiplicity of indolent women, who are without tasks or any work to occupy them . . . ."[52] Things had reached such a state of extremes that even the servants of the community had slaves. Clara de Santa Ines, identified as a slave of the convent, held captive a female Angolan slave named Andreza until 1780, when she granted her freedom.[53]

Slave escapes and acts of violence also challenged conventual authority. Life in the convent did not annihilate the desire for freedom. A black servant in 1723, aided by an outsider, jumped the wall of the nunnery in an attempted flight. She was, however, apprehended and the authorities

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[52]ABNRJ, XXXII (1914), 438-439.

[53]APB, Notas, CXXVIII, fol. 89v. For evidence of slaves of servants see AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 11516, 12105; ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 13.

indicated that they intended to make an example of her in order to prevent future occurrences.[54] Again in 1780, flight of another captive occasioned correspondence. A rural attorney had attempted to sell the slave in the Recôncavo town where he was caught and imprisoned. Since his efforts proved fruitless -- because "everyone avoids an escaped slave,"[55] the lawyer recommended that the slave be taken to Salvador where he could be sold in greater anonymity. Ten years later, two male slaves of the convent were accused of forcibly entering the house of Bacharel José Barboza de Oliveira and of stealing objects with an estimated value of 1,920 reis. The convent was required to furnish 40,000 reis for their release and to bear the costs of the trial.[56]

Acting in the belief that an excess of slaves was the root cause of the Desterro's lamentable spiritual state, the archbishop scrutinized closely applications for additional slaves, and usually denied them unless the petitioner could demonstrate exceptional need. Annoyed by the nuns' demand for slaves he deemed superfluous, the archbishop charged that the nuns evaded his inquiries concerning the

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[54]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pasta 28.

[55]ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 20, 21.

[56]APB, Notas, CXIX, fols. 120-120v; ASCD, Livro de dispesa, 1781-1805.

numbers, ages, and expenses of the slaves of the Desterro.[57] He further contended that some nuns, like Madre Eugénia Bernardina de Santa Anna, were deceitful. The sister alleged that her advanced age and illness had made a pair of slaves essential to her needs. Although at one time she possessed two, by the time of her appeal she argued that one had died and the other had been expelled from the cloister. On examination of the case, the archbishop discovered that one slave actually remained in her service. Furthermore, he rejected her claim of advanced age, insisting that her fifty years did not qualify her as elderly.[58]

Secondly, episcopal pressure resulted in a flurry of emancipations during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. While manumissions had occurred only sporadically before then, in the period from 1775 to 1800 it seems that more slaves were liberated than had been set free in the entire past century of the convent's history.[59] In the late 1760's the prelate required that some slaves be liberated at the death of their mistresses. For many of those in bondage, freedom was therefore hard-won and long in coming.

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[57] ASCD, Cxa. 1, Pastas 34, 39; AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6554-6555.

[58] AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér cat., 19447-19448.

[59] Supra., n. 43; AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6554-6555, 8814, 10319, 12103, reveals that the number of slaves in the convent consistently increased until the 1780's.

Judging from the prices of those emancipated, freed slaves were either the very young or the very old. Although a few slaves won their freedom without compensation to the owner, most purchased their own liberty by furnishing a stipulated sum. How this money was accumulated or where it was earned remains unclear. It is known that the slaves had a brotherhood within the convent, which placed capital on loan.[60] In one instance, a slave borrowed 50,000 reis from a nun in order to purchase freedom. The arrangement required that the freedwoman was to remain in the service of the religious until the debt was satisfied.[61]

Although most of the Desterro's captives were freed as a consequence of episcopal pressure, the deeds of emancipation make no mention of this fact. Virtually all of these documents allege that it was gratitude or affection which prompted the owner to release her slave from bondage. The slaves presumably earned their freedom through their faithful labors and devotion demonstrated in the face of their mistresses' illness or incapacity. However, the inability of a slave to supply the expected services might also on occasion result in the mixed-blessing of freedom. In 1789, the sister, Maria Teresa de Jesus, petitioned the archbishop to expel her slave and replace her with a free servant available to her because of the death of another nun. The

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[60] ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 58.

[61] ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 65(I).

motive given for the desired expulsion was explicitly stated: "the slave lies continually ill in bed, where she is not able to perform her duties, and on this account the [nun] suffers many shortcomings in her service."[62]

In spite of the professed affection and gratitude for the slave, death-bed inventories of the nuns indicate that captives received little in the way of bequests.[63] When they were left anything at all, it was usually no more than an old piece of clothing, usually that which had been worn by the nun as an undergarment. One slave received the old cot her diseased mistress had died in.[64]

Apart from liberations, another consequence of episcopal reform efforts was the apparent gradual conversion of the male slave population of the community to free hired workers. Records from the 1760's indicate 35 privately-owned male slaves. In 1779 the ledgers reveal only eight male slaves in the service of the community. Less than ten years later owing to the persistent efforts of the archbishop, all of the community's servants were now free individuals, drawing wages from the convent.[65]

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[62]AHU, Bahia, Maço 83, doc. 70.

[63]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pastas 60(I-IV).

[64]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Inventory of Madre Teresa da Fé, Pasta 60(II).

[65]AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 6554-6555, 8814, 12104.

However degrading a life in bondage, slaves experienced a mortality rate in the convent no higher than that of the nuns. Freedom contingent upon the death of one's owner required that a slave had to survive her mistress. More than likely, life in the convent sheltered from the ravages of contagious disease and famine probably guaranteed a life expectancy long for the period. In the conventual records little information remains regarding the care and sustenance of either the communal slave population or the personal slaves. Occasional entries demonstrate that in the 1750's the usual diet consisted of rice, beans, farinha and meat -- on those days when it was permitted in the convent. Beans and fish additionally supplied protein. In times of illness, according to the testimony of one abbess, slaves received the same treatment as the religious. Both received the attentions of the barber (for bloodlettings), the doctor and the surgeon, and the medicinal aid of poultry, syrups and other current curatives.[66] By mid-nineteenth century the high incidence of libertas who survived their mistresses presented a dilemma for the Desterro. Too old or ill to seek other employment, many remained in the care of the convent, placing the burden of their support on the dwindling conventual finances. In 1860 the nunnery held more

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[66] ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 47(I); AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 1ª sér. cat., 12104.

than 150 attendants to minister to 29 religious and 13 seculars. By 1881 the number still remained well over 120.[67]

The episcopal reform of the Desterro during the latter third of theeighteenth century centered on three objectives: the restoration of its spiritual temper by the elimination of venality and disciplinary laxity, the reduction of excessive numbers of religious and seculars, and the reform of the conventual administration. Whether or not these measures met with success remains an open question. What is clear is that the convent during the Empire was a different institution from that of the colony. By the mid-nineteenth century, the Desterro, once notorious for its opulence, corruption and social prominence, had been transformed into the inconspicuousness of piety and poverty, inspired by its vows.

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[67]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 49.

VIII CONCLUSIONS

The Desterro Convent was significantly linked to the economy and society of Brazil's colonial capital, Salvador, as a shelter for the daughters of Salvador's elite and as a financial center. The findings of this study therefore reflect this dual involvement of the order with its social matrix.

Defining the social composition of the nunnery was one object of this work. The integral importance of the convent to Bahia's gentry was revealed in a survey of 53 prominent eighteenth-century families. Tracing the lifestyle (marriage, celibacy or the church) of more than 160 women demonstrated the strikingly low incidence of marriage. That is to say, over 70 percent of the female progeny of Salvador's notables took the veil rather than marry. Such a great preference for the convent among Bahia's privileged sectors indicates that (a) the nunnery served as an accepted alternative to marriage (b) it moreover constituted the desirable option for unendowed daughters and (c) as an aid to curtailing marriages, the convent functioned so as to buttress the exclusivity of the elite.

This aspect of the study, raised many questions concerning the make-up of the uppermost sectors of society. The results of the work indicate the presence among Salvador's highest echelons of a greater number of merchant families than had previously been suggested. There is, therefore, reason to view the Bahian social elite as possibly heterogeneous (consisting of merchants, planters, slave-traders and others) prior to the eighteenth century.

The halls of the Desterro were not, however, restricted to the highest elements in Bahian society. At the apex of the institution's existence, approximately 400 servants and slaves, largely personal retainers, attended the nuns. It would appear from the relatively long lifespan of the slaves that monastic bondage was, like domestic servitude, a form of slavery milder than that in the canefields. Although rare, some slaves were married and raised children in conventual captivity. In terms of racial origins, they were divided approximately equally (according to a 15 percent sample) between Africans and creoles. The white domestics (not slaves) must not, however, be overlooked. Their social origins at this point unfortunately remain somewhat obscure.

It has already been indicated that the daughters

of the privileged social sectors of the colonial capital inhabited the cloister of the Destêrro. Was theirs a life of enforced seclusion, as traditional views of religious women would have us believe? My findings reveal that the nuns of the Destêrro lived in such style, entertained so lavishly, and dressed in such extremely high fashion that the convent became the object of a thorough-going episcopal and royal reform. However, apart from frivolity, a life of independent activity led a number of Poor Clares to become involved in financial dealings.

The loans proferred by individual nuns must be distinguished from the lending operations of the conventual institution. The Destêrro was one of the outstanding lenders of the era. The social group which comprised its clientele was primarily the sugar planter. Ordinarily, a loan was extended tin exchange for a mortgage assumed on the planter's estate. During the eighteenth century heavy indebtedness of the sugar growers remained the rule rather than the exception. Such mortgages (or loans) were repaid generally over long-term periods. Still,planters were frequently in default on their debts. Failure to fulfill an obligation rarely resulted in foreclosure by the Destêrro until the latter eighteenth century, probably due to the reform of the nunnery's finances. Foreclosure was

then usually executed only at the death of the debtor, prior to the estate's division among the heirs of the deceased. Interestingly, it must be noted that the convent did not retain all of the property it acquired in such appropriations. Contrary to what is generally believed characteristic of the Church, the nunnery regularly sold off its rural and sometimes its unwanted urban holdings.

In spite of this practice, the Destêrro was one of Bahia's foremost urban landowners in the eighteenth-century. A select few of its properties were high-rent, prestigious accommodations. By contrast to these few, the majority of its holdings were rat-infested, dilapidated, single-story mud and wattle structures rented to Salvador's eighteenth century poor. Great numbers of low-rent dwellings, a high turnover in occupants and subsequent losses in rental, along with the costs of maintenance and repairs meant that income from real estate remained inferior to that generated by loans.

In summary, the eighteenth century was the golden age in the life of the Destêrro Convent. Prestige and affluence, grand family names, luxury and extravagance were the hallmarks of the nunnery in its colonial heyday. More important, the Convent of the Poor Clares was a central institution in Bahian society as a repository for women, and as a bank and landowner.

In the nineteenth century the once formidable order had entered a serious decline. The increasing secularity of the era, fewer entrants and dwindling revenues sounded the deathknell for the Destêrro. When at one time a place as a Clarissa was the object of fierce competition, by the mid-nineteenth century even the vacancies among the nuns of the black veil had no takers. The convent's offices were routinely occupied by the same nuns, until ultimately the lesser positions went unfilled at the death of their last available holders.[1] Observance of ritual declined as the community aged and fewer nuns were able to attend services. In 1853 only 33 religious inhabited the cells that had once accommodated nearly 100 nuns. Declining entrants meant fewer dowries. The meagre income of the institution was unable to provide for the remaining members of the community. The numbers of nuns declined faster than the slaves. In 1881 the abbess recorded that the convent sheltered 13 religious, 12 seculars, 22 servants, and more than 100 domestics who had been personal attendants to deceased nuns.[2] Particularly those who were ill and aged,

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[1] ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 49.

[2] ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 49; Another document in the pasta, dated 1860 indicates that there were 153 servants who had once been personal retainers presently in the care of the community.

unable to care for themselves, remained in the protection of the community, only to further burden its resources. Only through forced sales of the conventual patrimony was the nunnery able to meet expenses. The 100 houses reported in 1850 had been gradually sold off until by 1880 only eight remained.[3] In 1903, three aging Poor Clares still resided in the cloister of the Destêrro, when a new order of Franciscan sisters, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, arrived to reinvigorate the dying institution.[4]

Today, the nuns of the present community of the Sacred Heart number about thirty-five. None of them has fewer than twenty years of the religious life behind her, and most have devoted many more. The order now runs an elementary school for girls. Contemporary concerns occupy the Destêrro's current inhabitants. One nun is a social worker, another, a nurse. The once grandiose cells of the Poor Clares have been converted into classrooms.

The tradition of the convent continues to survive in the room which houses the archive, in the halls lined with saintly relics and portraits, and even in the consciousness of the nunnery's present occupants. Although little of the Destêrro's history is know to them, the pre-

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[3]ASCD, Cxa. 2, Pasta 49.

[4]Con. Christiano Müller, Memoria histórica sobre a religião na Bahia, 1823-1923 (Bahia, 1923), pp. 141-142.

served skull of the revered Vitória da Encarnação is proudly displayed to all guests. But the remnants of the past are best preserved in the structure of the convent. The original eighteenth-century edifice still stands elegantly on a hill slightly remote from the center of town. The shaded portico, the ponderous wooden door with its iron latches, the tiled church walls, the gilded altar, and the Moorish patio with its azure belltower and functioning clock attest to the past magnificence of the institution. Truly worth remembering is the singular hallway whose floors of jacarandá planking shine in their original elegance. At the window seats framed in stone which overlook the patio, one can almost hear the conversations of the sisters. The gallery of saints in miniature, and the sombre figures in oil have surveyed four centuries of passersby. Once inside the golden chapel, its altar and sacristy are breathtaking in their unabashed opulence. But surely, the spectacle most memorable is the stark black cross framed by an archway of light at the end of the corridor. Its awesome simplicity amidst the lavish displays of baroque reflects the complexity and paradox of the history of the Poor Clares in colonial Salvador.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

APPENDIX I

TABLE 1: FATHERS OF NUNS OF THE BLACK VEIL SERVING ON THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

DAUGHTERS' PROFESSION	MUNICIPAL COUNCILORS	TOTAL FATHERS*	% TOTAL
1677-1700	17	29	59
1701-1733	7	18	39
1734-1765	7	32	23
1766-1800	6	21	29

*This figure represents approximately 75 percent of the fathers of the nuns of the Desterro. No biographical information was located for the remaining 25 percent.

TABLE 2

INCOME OF THE DESTÊRRO CONVENT FROM LOANS AND REAL ESTATE

	LOANS		REAL ESTATE			
YEAR	CAPITAL ON LOAN (in reis)	INCOME FROM INTEREST	EXTENT OR VALUE OF HOLDINGS	INCOME FROM RENTALS	TOTAL INCOME	TOTAL ASSETS
1702					5,848,643	
1756	127,819,407	6,200,000	65 houses	1,342,650		
1764	127,819,407	6,390,970	65 houses 22.5 braças of land	1,342,650 2,250	7,735,870	
1772	118,711,589 2,000,000	5,935,579 100,000	80 houses 2 lands 1 fazenda with tenants Value: 46,559,766	2,478,320	8,638,645	197,460,010
1859			104 houses lands			

PLEDGES OF DONATIONS TO THE DESTÊRRO
1644 – 1677

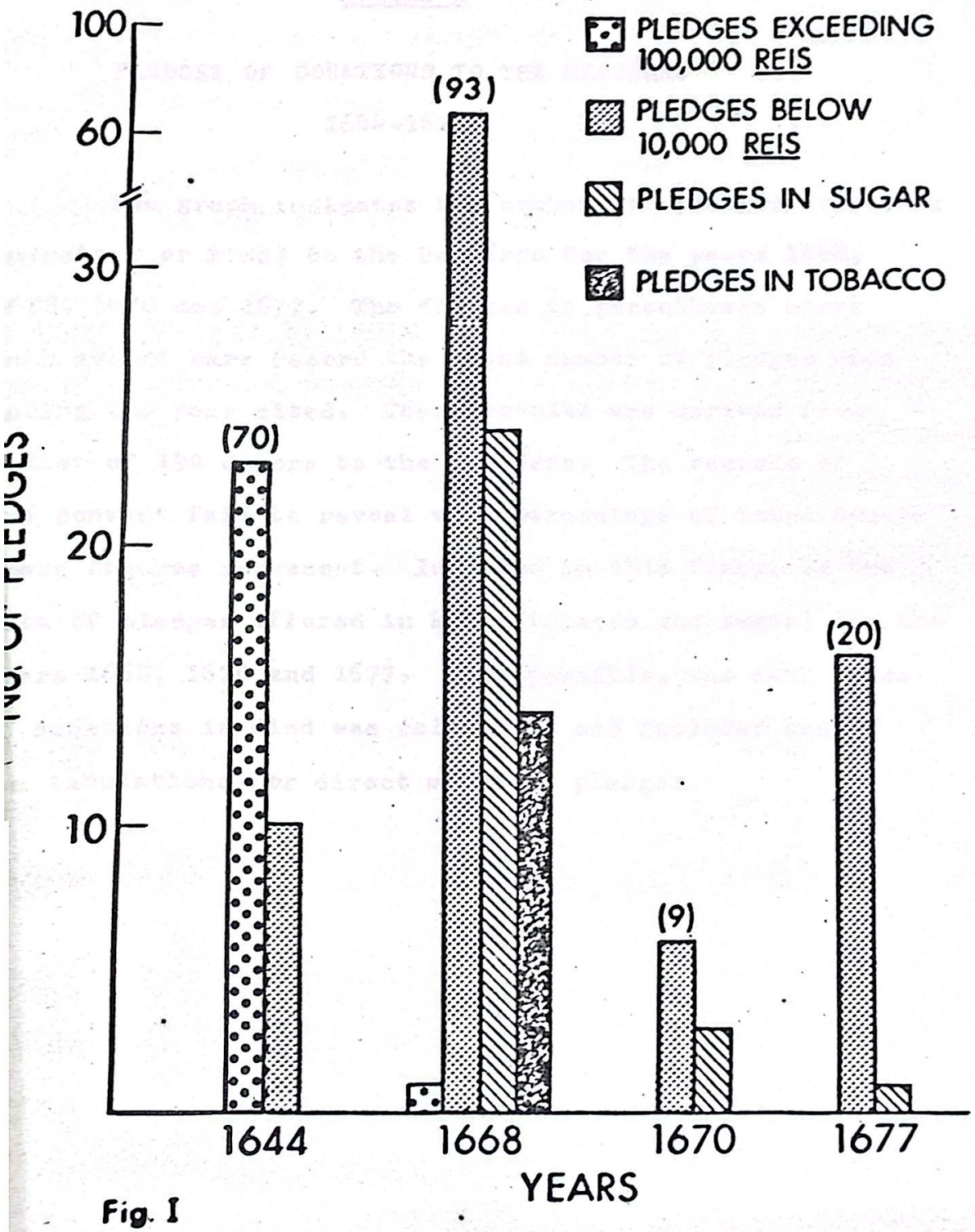

Fig. I

FIGURE I

PLEDGES OF DONATIONS TO THE DESTÊRRO
1644-1677

The graph indicates the numbers of pledged donations (monetary or kind) to the Destêrro for the years 1644, 1688, 1670 and 1677. The figures in parenthesis above each set of bars record the total number of pledges made during the year cited. These results are derived from a list of 190 donors to the Destêrro. The records of the convent fail to reveal what percentage of total donors these figures represent. Included in this figure is the data of pledges offered in kind (tobacco and sugar) for the years 1668, 1670 and 1677. When possible, the cash value of donations in kind was calculated and included under the tabulations for direct monetary pledges.

DAUGHTERS OF MERCHANTS AND PLANTERS ADMITTED AS NUNS OF THE BLACK VEIL

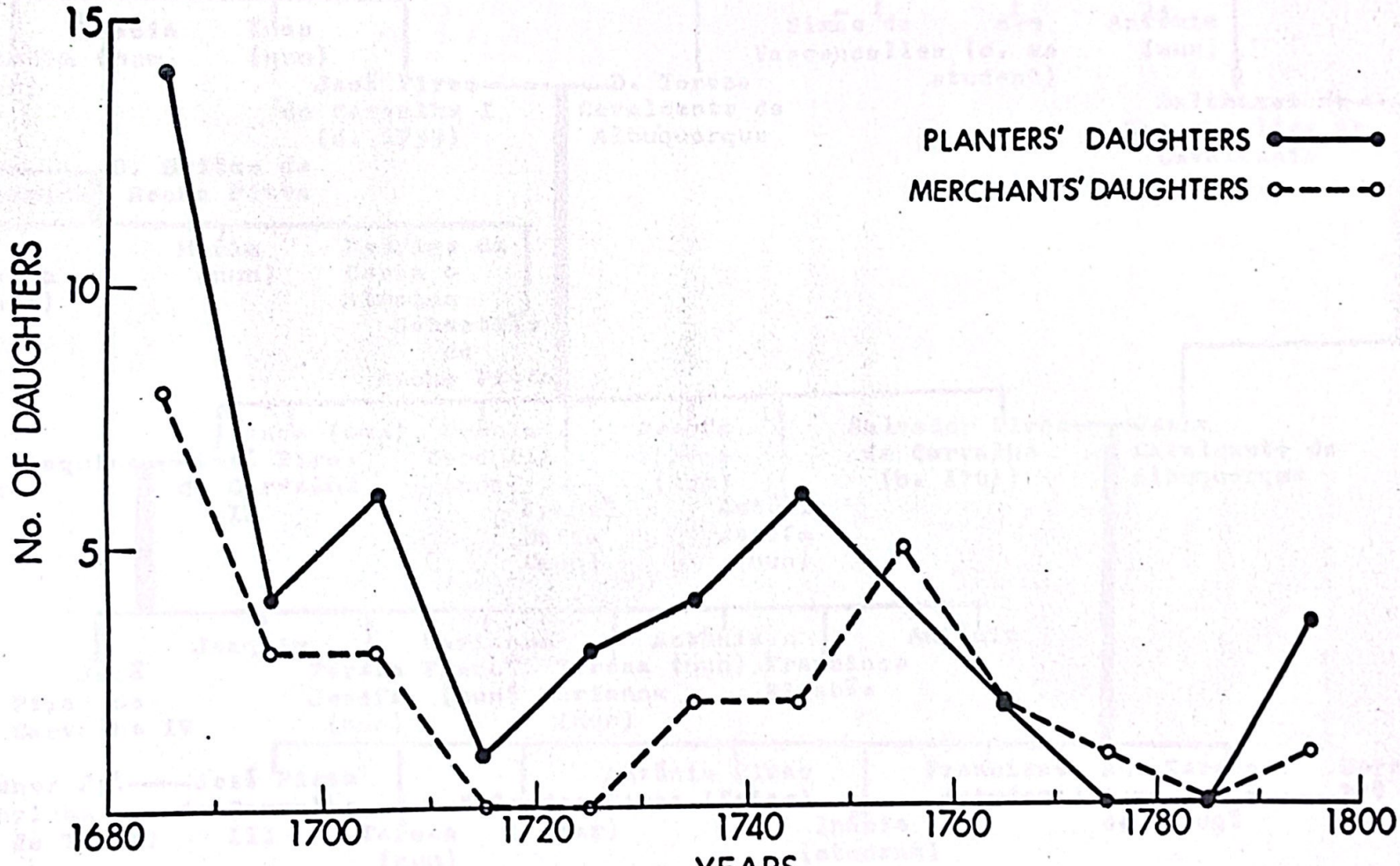

Fig. II

DAUGHTERS OF MERCHANTS AND PLANTERS ADMITTED AS NUNS OF THE BLACK VEIL

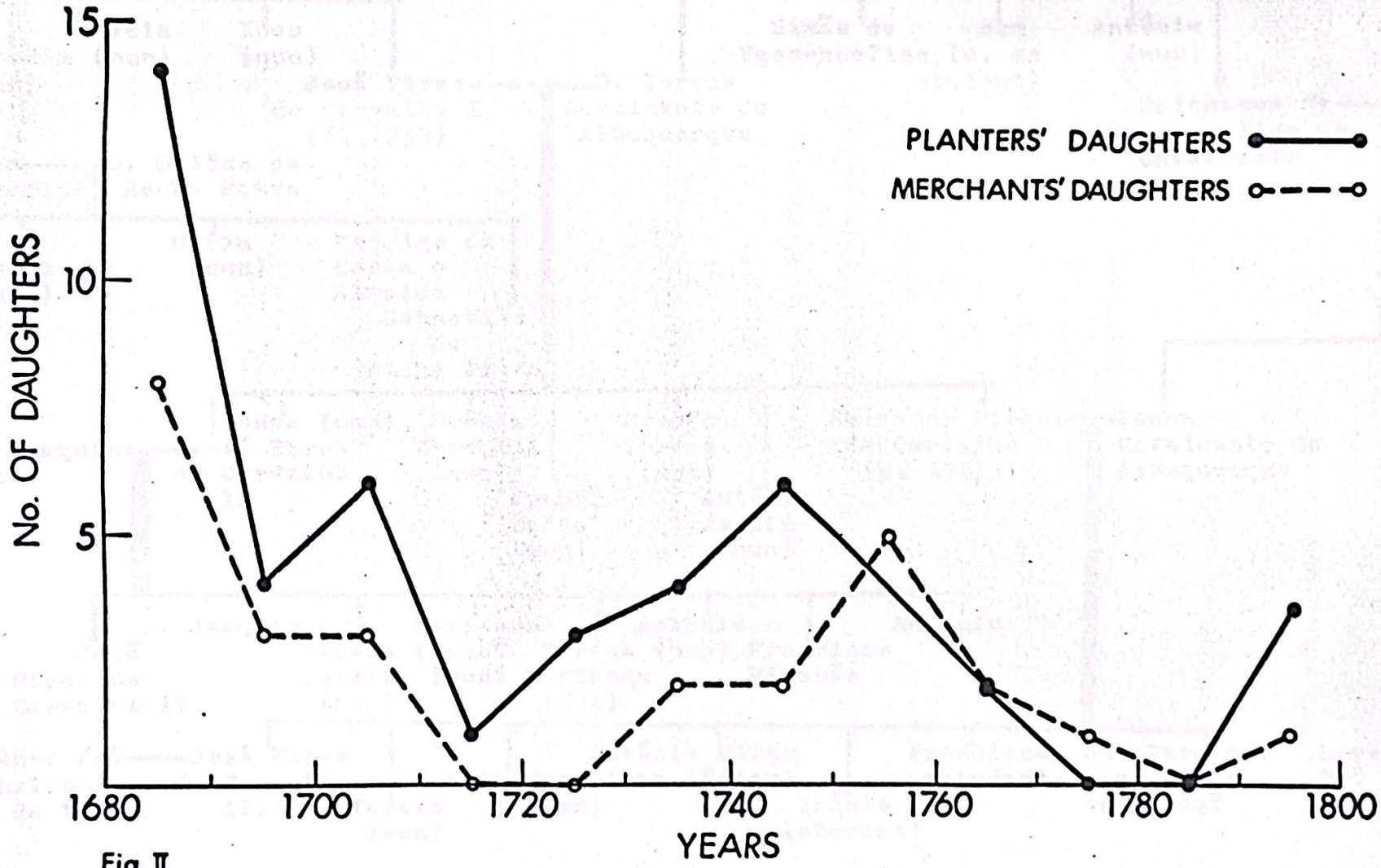

Fig. II

FIGURE III
INTERRELATIONSHIPS AMONG BAHIA'S ELITE

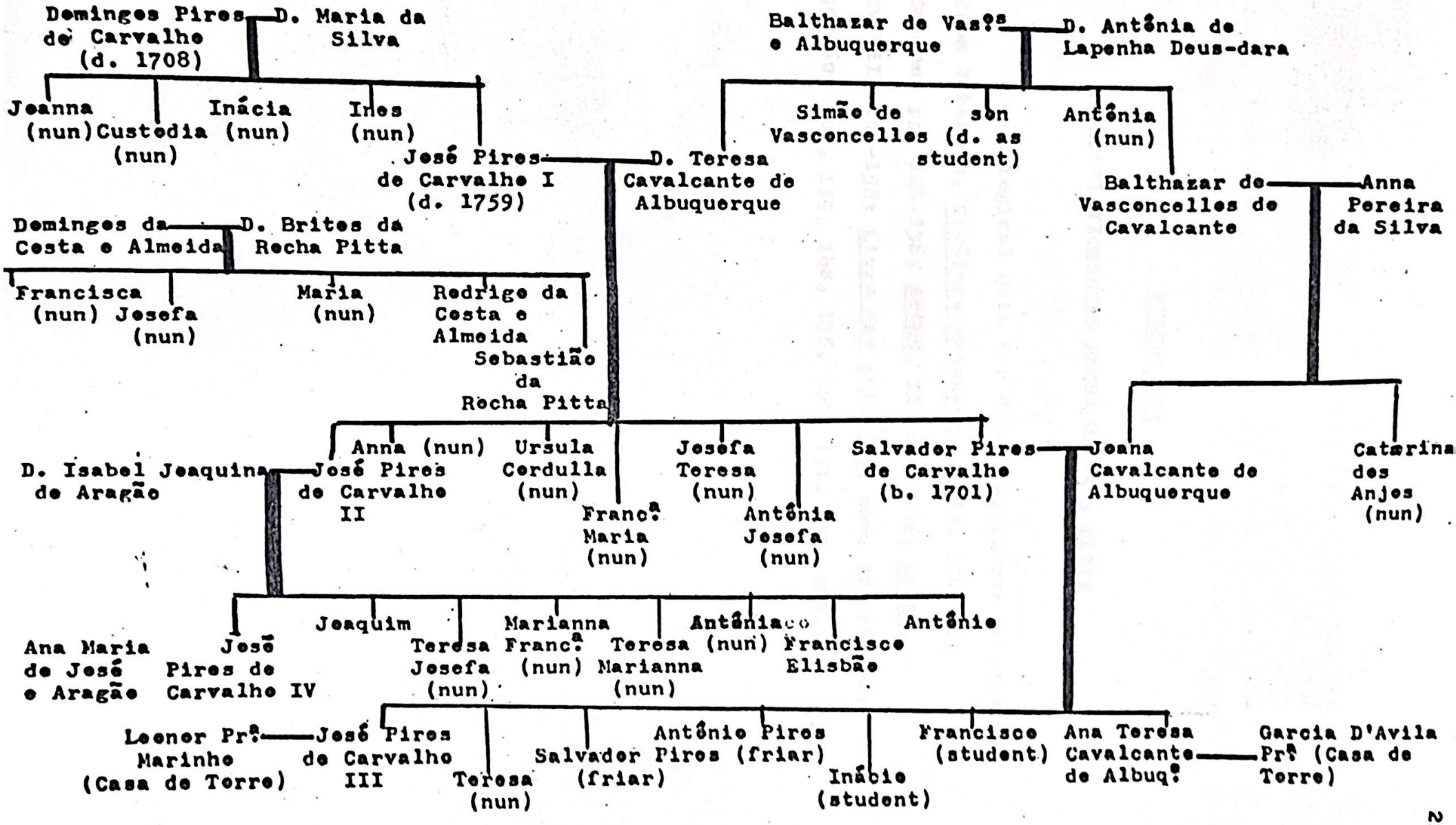

FIGURE III

INTERRELATIONSHIPS AMONG BAHIA'S ELITE

Genealogical data for this diagram was compiled from Jaboatão, Catálogo genealógico, II, 124-125; Calmon, pp. 126-136; APCHB, II, no. 4246; ABNRJ, XXXVII, 156-158; Livro das entradas, nos. 32, 45, 46, 59, 60, 106, 119, 148, 178, 190, 191, 201, 203.

DISTRIBUTION OF CELIBATE AND MARRIED FEMALE OFFSPRING AMONG THE BAHIAN ELITE

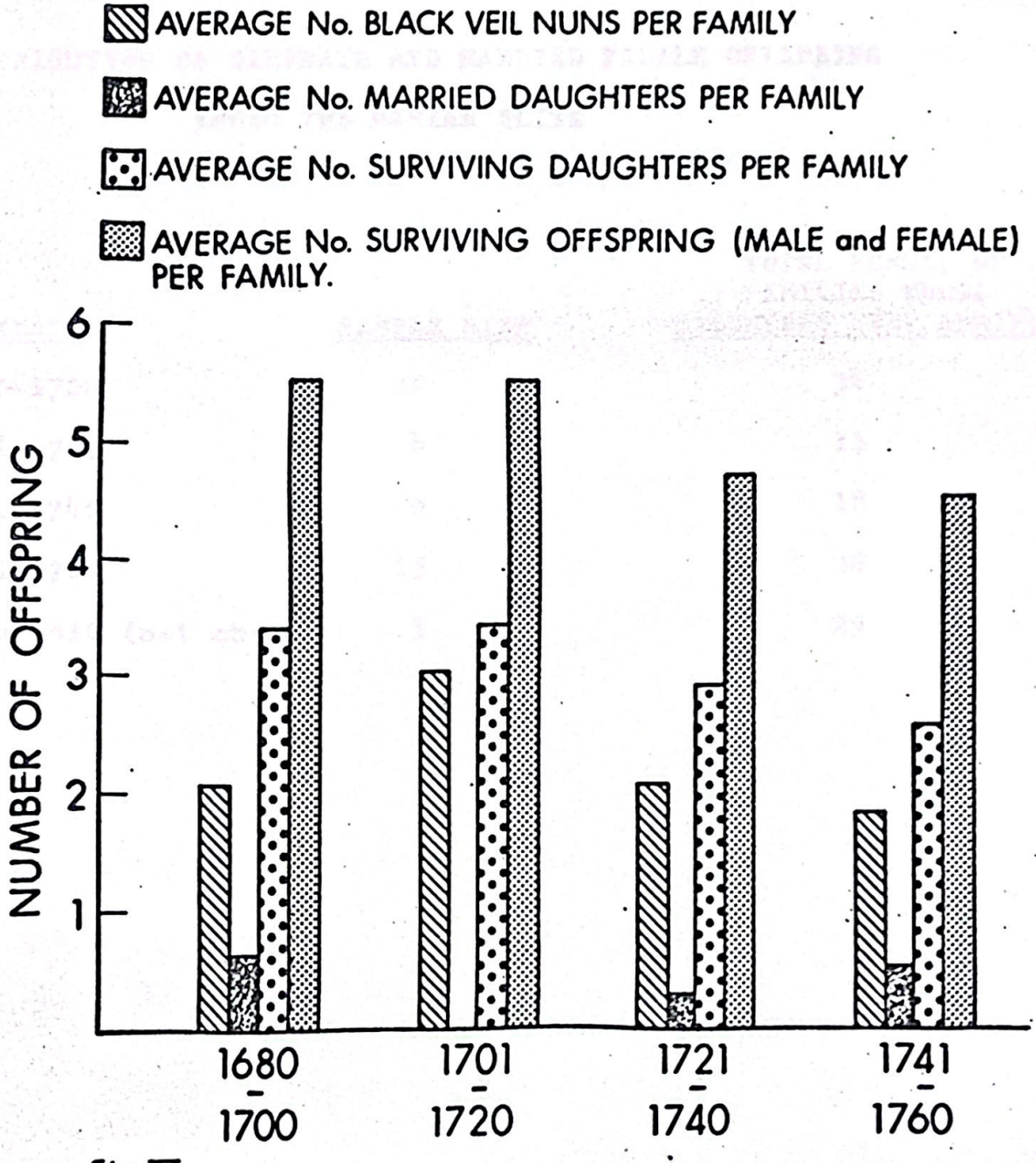

Fig. IV

CHANGES IN POPULATION OF DESTÊRRO CONVENT

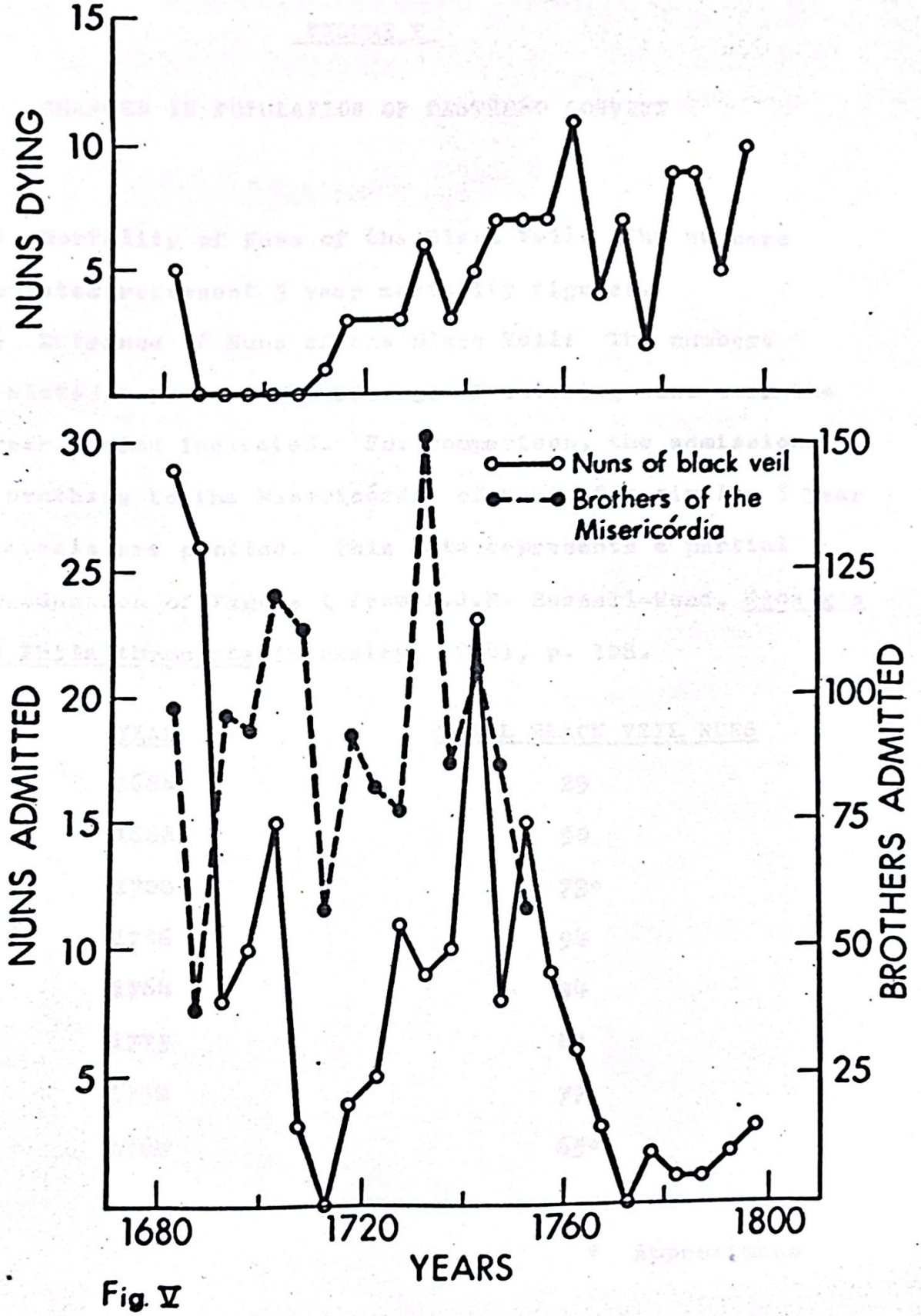

Fig. V

APPENDIX II: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA ON FATHERS OF THE NUNS OF THE BLACK VEIL

FATHER'S NAME	NUMBER OF DAUGHTERS IN DESTÊRRO	YEARS OF PROFESSION	DAUGHTERS' PLACE OF BAPTISM	FATHER'S VOCATION	MOTHER'S NAME	MUNICIPAL COUNCIL POSTS	FATHER/ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SOURCES
Antonio Alvares Lima	Ursula Maria de Jesus 1	1754	Santa Sé (S)*	comerciante	Maria de Jesus			Livro das entradas, 168, Caldas p. 525.
Antonio de Araújo Gomes	Anna do Coracão de Jesus 1	1805	Santo Amaro (R)*		Anna Joaquina da Resurreição		Sargento-mor; Ordem de Cristo	Livro das entradas, 212, Cxa. 1 Pastas 12,13,14.
Antonio de Brito Correia	Brites da Gloria 1	1705	Salvador (S)	cattle rancher	Isabel Josefa Maria de Galhegos	almotace, 1696; vereador, 1699		DHAMB, Atas, II, 86-87, 133-36; VI, 321,337; Pasta 2(II).
Antonio de Brito de Sousa	Isabel da Visitação ?? 2	1688		sr.de engenho [?]	Teresa Micaela de Jesus	almotace, 1676; procurador.	capitão-mor, Villa São Francisco	Jaboatão, IV, 157, Costa, pp. 97, 322; Cxa. 1, Pasta 2(II); APCHB, 3460-3461; DHAMB, Atas, V, 176; VI, 7-8

*S - Salvador
R - Recôncavo

Jaboatão - Catálogo genealógico
Costa - Achegas genealógicas
Caldas - Notícia geral
Ruy - História da câmara
Russell-Wood - Fidalgos and Philanthropists

FATHER'S NAME	NUMBER OF DAUGHTERS IN DESTÊRRO	YEARS OF PROFESSION	DAUGHTERS' PLACE OF BAPTISM	FATHER'S VOCATION	MOTHER'S NAME	MUNICIPAL COUNCIL POSTS	FATHER/ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SOURCES
Antonio da Costa Bernardes	Rosa do Paraiso 1	1718	Santa Sé (S)				Alferes	Livro das entradas, 87.
Antonio Gonçalves da Rocha	Luisa Maria de Jesus Clara Luisa do Bacramento Francisca Custódia das Chagas Francisca.. 4	1738 1733 1733 ?	Santa Veracrus Itaparica (R)	captain of fort of São Lourenço (Itaparica), 1716. sr. de engenho.	Luiza de Queiroz Araujo; later remarried to sr. de engenho, Manuel Vieira Pedrosa.	procurador, 1718; vereador, 1726	Ordem de Cristo Misericórdia provedor, 1725	APB, Notas, LXXVII, 91v-95v Jaboatão, IV, 192; Costa, p. 106; Ruy, Hist. da câm, p. 359; Russell-Wood, p 374. Livro das entradas, 110, 123-124, 175.
Antonio Machado Velho	Maria de Jesus 1	1742	S. Bartolemeo, Maragogipe (R)	sr. de engenho	Annade Sousa Aragão			Livro das ents., 134; APB, Notas, LXX, 282-285; Jaboatão, IV, 169-170; Costa, 112.
Antonio da Silva Gomes	Anna Maria de São José 1	1750	Santa Sé (S)		Teresa de Jesus			Costa, p. 125; Livro das ents., 159.
Baltazar de Vasconcelos Cavalcante de Albuquerque	Antonia do Paraiso 1	1691	N.S. de Piedade (S)	sr. de engenho	Antonia de Penha Deusdará, daughter of Simão de Fonseca de Siqueira, sr. de de engenho			Costa, p. 135; Jaboatão, II, 124-125; Livro das ents., 46.

FATHER'S NAME	NUMBER OF DAUGHTERS IN DESTÊRRO	YEARS OF PROFESSION	DAUGHTERS' PLACE OF BAPTISM	FATHER'S VOCATION	MOTHER'S NAME	MUNICIPAL COUNCIL POSTS	FATHER/ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SOURCES
Clemente Carneiro	Josefa de Jesus 1	1704	"Salvador"	advogado	Antonia Timotia de Carvalho		procurador licensiado	DHAMB, Atas, V, 271; Livro do Tombo . . . Mosteiro de São Bento, p. 264.
Cosme de Barros Marinho	Margarida dos Prazeres 1	1689	Paraiba		. . . de Curada		coronel	Livro das ents., 44; Cxa. 1, Pasta 7.
Cristovão de Azevedo	Inácia do Sacramento Antonia de São Francisca Maria da Cruz 3	168[?] 1686	Santa Sé (S)		Anna de Oliveira			Livro das ents.; Cxa. 1, Pasta 2(II).
Diogo Pereira Bastos	Maria Teresa de Jesus 1	1738			Teresa de Jesus Maria			Costa, p. 165.
Domingos da Alvares Pereira	Francisca Maria do Sacramento 1	1748	Santo Amaro (R)	sr. de engenho	Catarina do Pereira [?] e Oliveira		coronel	Exa. 1, Pastas II, 17(I).
Domingos da Costa de Almeida	Francisca Maria do Sacramento Teresa Josefa do Sacramento Anna Maria do Sacramento 1	1748 1730 ? 1738 ?		sr. de engenho	Brites da Rocha Pitta		coronel da ordenanca; Ordem de Cristo; Provedor da alfândega	ABNRJ, XXX, 215; Jaboatão, II, 115; Costa, p. 172; Caldas, p. 433; Araújo Aragão, p. 12.

FATHER'S NAME	NUMBER OF DAUGHTERS IN DESTÊRRO	YEARS OF PROFESSION	DAUGHTERS' PLACE OF BAPTISM	FATHER'S VOCATION	MOTHER'S NAME	MUNICIPAL COUNCIL POSTS	FATHER/ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SOURCES
Domingos Dias	Margarida da Coluna 1	1688	N.S. do Rosário, Cairú (R)		Inácia da Costa	vereador, 1680,1687, 1689; procurador, 1660.	capitão	Cxa. 1, Pasta 7
Domingos Pires de Carvalho	Joanna da Carnação Custódia dos Anjos Inácia da Cruz Ines da Conceição 4	1688 1692 1701 1701	Conceição da Praia (S)	homem de negócio	Maria da Silva	procurador, 1687.	coronel das ordenanças; "negócios largos".	Calmon, História da Casa, pp. 133-134; APCHB, II, 4246; Ruy, História da câmara, p. 355.
Felix Pereira de Lisboa [?] Piedade [?]	Teresa Joaquina de Jesus 1	1786	Conceição da Praia (S)		Germana Inácia do Espirito Santo	procurador, 1769	sargento	Ruy, Hist. câm, p. 363, Livro das ents., 197.
Francisco de Albuquerque Camara	Maria Magdalena 1	1746	Pernambuco		Maria Teresa da Costa			Jaboatão, II,111.
Francisco Borges de Barros	Rosa Teresa do Salvador Maria Francisca de Jesus 2	1807 1807	Santo Amaro (R)	sr. de engenho ?	Teresa Rosa do Salvador Borges		coronel, Milicia da Torre	Livro das ents., 215-216; John Kennedy, personal communication. 2/1973.

FATHER'S NAME	NUMBER OF DAUGHTERS IN DESTÊRRO	YEARS OF PROFESSION	DAUGHTERS' PLACE OF BAPTISM	FATHER'S VOCATION	MOTHER'S NAME	MUNICIPAL COUNCIL POSTS	FATHER/ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SOURCES
Francisco de Brito de Sampaio	Leonor de Madre de Deus	1701		sr. de engenho	Maria Francisca Xavier Aranha	juiz ordinário, 1695	capitão da infanteria; fidalgo da casa real; provedor da alfandega; son of provedor.	Jaboatão, III, 202-203; Costa, p. 201; AQCH, VIII, 417.
	Maria dos Prazeres	1707						
	Clara do Sacramento	1700	S. Pedro (S)					
	Joanna da Cruz	1710						
	Antonia do Salvador	1710						
	Francisca da Conceição	1701 ?						
	Francisca das Chagas	1700	N. S. do Socorro ?					
	7							
Francisco Calmon e Almeida	Marianna da Penha da França	1726	-	"grande proprietario, "fazendas"	Inácia Maria de Almeida		coronel fidalgo da casa real	Jaboatão, IV, 126-127; Costa, 201-202.
	Francisca Maria							
	2							
Francisco Correia Lima	Brites da Esperança	1688	-		Anna Vieira			Livro da fundação, fols. 7-9v; Pasta 2II, Jaboatão, Novo orbe, VI, 770-771.
	1							
Francisco Gomes Loures	Eugenia Bernardina de Santa Anna	1780	Pilar (S)	comerciante	Paula de Oliveira			Caldas, pp. 525, 527, 529
	1							

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Francisco Jorge da Rocha	Marianna de Jesus Maria 1	1742	São Pedro de Tararipe (R)	sr. de engenho	Isidora da Silva Serqueira		mestre de campo	Ruy, História d câmara, p. 364; Livro das ents.
Francisco Lopes Delgado	Antonia Maria de São José 1	1724	Conceição da Praia (S)		Anna Maria de Mendonça		capitão	Costa, pp. 211, 333; Livro das ents., 93-94
Francisco Machado Peçanha	Inácia Francisca da Cruz Margarida Terezazdo Livramento22	1721 1721	Santa Sé (S)	military (Dutch wars)	Maria Gomes Carneiro		tenente general da infanteria	Costa, p. 212; Jaboatão, IV, 209; Livro das ents., 90-91.
Francisco Martins Pereira	Joanna de São Antonio 1	1718	Santiago (R)		Antonia de V...de Aragão		capitão	Livro das ents., 88.
Francisco Pereira Porto	Hieronyma da Gloria 1	168 [?]	Santa Sé (S)	sr. de engenho ?	Catarina de Oliveira			Jaboatão, Novo orbe, VI, 659; Jaboatão, Catálogo, III, 161-162; Cxa. 1, Pasta 2(II); Livro das ents., 8.
Francisco de Távora	Anna de Jesus Maria 1	1738	Santa Sé (S)	Reverendo padre	Brites da Maria . . .			Livro das ents., 122.
Francisco Teixeira Alvares	Francisca de Santo Anselmo 1	1744	Conceição da Praia (S)	comerciante	Catarina Dias de Almeida			Caldas, pp. 526, 552; Livro das ents., 147.

FATHER'S NAME	NUMBER OF DAUGHTERS IN DESTÊRRO	YEARS OF PROFESSION	DAUGHTERS' PLACE OF BAPTISM	FATHER'S VOCATION	MOTHER'S NAME	MUNICIPAL COUNCIL POSTS	FATHER/ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SOURCES
Francisco de Vasconcelos e Albuquerque	Ursula da Conceição 1	1681		sr. de engenho	Antonia Lobo			Jaboatão, II, 123-124; Costa, p. 225; Cxa. 1, Pasta 2(II); Livro das ents. 2.
Gaspar Pacheco de Contreiras	Cosma de Jesus 1	1701	Santa Sé (S)	sr. de engenho	Petronilha de Burgos		capitão	Costa, p. 236; Jaboatão, III, 234; DHAMB, Atas, V, 290; Livro das ents. 70.
Gregório Pereira de Abreu	Anna Teresa de Jesus 1	1755	Conceição da Praia (S)	mercador	Ursula das Virgens		capitão	Caldas, p. 533; Livro das ents. 171; Cxa. 1, Pasta 10(I),11.
Inácio de Matos	Anna Maria da Paixão 1	1688	-	homem de negócio	Anna Telles de Menezes	vereador,1665	familiar do Santo Ofício	DHBNRJ, LXXXIX, 81-83, APCHB, II 3446-3447; DHAMB, Atas, IV, 215; Costa, pp. 248-249.
Inácio Siqueira de Villas Boas	Catarina Bernarda de Jesus 1	1751	Santo Amaro (R)	sr. de engenho	Joanna Catarina Bittencourt de Sá de Menezes de Aragão		capitão mor	Costa, p. 250; Jaboatão, IV, 131.

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Jacomé José de Seixas	Juliana Teresa do Sacramento Josefa Clara de Jesus 2	1760 1762	Conceição da Praia (S)	comerciante	Josefa de Seixas		capitão	Costa, pp. 248-249.
João de Aguiar Villas Boas	Ursula das Virgins Catarina do Sacramento 1	1681 168 [?]	Salvador (S)	sr. de engenho	Catarina de Goes Siqueira	vereador 1662.	capitão familiar do Santo Oficio provedor, 1674, Misericórdia	Costa, p. 257; Jaboatão, IV, 129-130; Cxa. 2(II), Pasta 2(II); Russell-Wood, p. 373.
João Antunes Moreira	Francisca da Trindade Marianna de Espirito Santo 2	1702 1702		cattle rancher	Tereza da Maya Pimentel	almotace	escrivão da Fazenda da da Bahia	APCHB, II, 427; Livro das ents. 72-73; DHAMB, Atas, V, 214-215; VI, 44-45.
João de Bittencourt	Elena Tereza da Cruz 1	1745	Rosário (Cachoeira) (R)		Clara da França		capitão desembargador	Santos Vilhena, II,310.
João Borges de Macedo	Maria da Soledade 1	1687	-		Maria de Barros			Jaboatão, III, 231-232; Jaboatão, Novo orbe, no.'s 731-740; Costa, 261.
José da Costa Bulcão	Anna Barbara de São José 1	1757	N.S. do Montes		Maria de Araujo Sousa de Aragão			Costa, p. 286; Jaboatão, IV, 169.

FATHER'S NAME	NUMBER OF DAUGHTERS IN DESTERRO	YEARS OF PROFESSION	DAUGHTERS' PLACE OF BAPTISM	FATHER'S VOCATION	MOTHER'S NAME	MUNICIPAL COUNCIL POSTS	FATHER/ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SOURCES
João de Couros Carneiro	Maria Caetana Catarina do Monte Simái Pasqua da Resurreicão Marianna Chavier 4	1693 1696 1701	S. Pedro (S)	"proprietário"	Joana Teles de Vasconcelos	escrivão	sargento-mor	Jaboatão, III, 111-12; Costa, p. 264.
João Luis Ferreira	Josefa 1	1698			Margarida Rodrigues, mulatta ?		capitão	Livro das ents. Cxa. 1, Pasta 87.
João Pinto Dantas	Anna Maria ? 2	1687	-	homem de negócio criador de gado	?			DHAMB, Atas, V, 239; VI, 335.
João da Silva dos Santos	Maria Angelica da Purificação 1	1807	São Pedro (S)	property in Porto Seguro, Villa de Alcobaça	Rosa Maria da Conceição		capitão-mor	Sesmarias, p.18; Cxa. 1, Pasta 12
João do Vales	Marianna de São José Antonia da Piedade 2	1701 1701	Santa Sé (S)		Brites de Azevedo			Livro das ents.; Cxa. 1, Pastas 27,33.
Joaquim José de Figueiredo	Anna Clara de Jesus Teresa Bernardina de Jesus Maria Clara da Conceição Francisca Leonor do Coração de Jesus 4	1809 1809 1809 1809	Espirito Santo, Inhambuppe		Anna Micaela de São José		alferes	Livro das ents., 224-227.

FATHER'S NAME	NUMBER OF DAUGHTERS IN DESTÊRRO	YEARS OF PROFESSION	DAUGHTERS' PLACE OF BAPTISM	FATHER'S VOCATION	MOTHER'S NAME	MUNICIPAL COUNCIL POSTS	FATHER/ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SOURCES
José Alvares Vianna	Maria Teresa de São José Anna Maria do Sacramento 2	1736 1736	Conceição da Praia (S)		Francisca Josefa de Pina	vereador, 1721	coronel	Ruy, Hist. da câmara, p. 359. Cxa. 1, Pasta 9
José Bernardino Souto Maior	Catarina de ... Maria Luisa do Espirito Santo 2	1802 1802	São Gonçalo do Peso do Banco (R)		Anna Francisca dos Santos		tenente coronel	Cxa. 1, Pasta 10(II), 13.
José de Brito Freyre	Joanna Maria de São José 1	1741	Santa Sé (S)		Marianna da Cruz		capitão	Cxa. 1, Pasta 10(II), 11, 18(II).
José da Costa Bulcão	Anna Barbara de São José 1	1757	N.S. do Monte	sr. de engenho ?	Maria de Sousa de Aragão			Costa, p. 286; Cxa. 1, Pasta 11
José da Cunha Reis	Luisa Maria de Santo Antonio 1	1741	-	"por viver de algum negócio"	Luisa Maria de Santo Antonio			APB, Notas, LXXI, 183-185.
José de Gois de Araujo	Angela de São Jose 1	168 [?]			Maria de Menezes	vereador, 1661	licensiado	DHAMB, Atas, IV, 90-91; Jaboatão, IV, 191; Costa, p. 289.
José de Gois de Siqueira	Catarina do Sacramento 1	1726	Santo Amaro	sr. de engenho ?	Maria de Brá de Araujo			Costa, p. 290; Jaboatão, IV, 130-131.
José Gomes da Silva	Antonia Isabel Teresa Joaquina 2	1804 1807	Jagoaripe N.S. de Ajuda		Anna . . . da Purificação		sargento-mor	Cxa. 1, Pasta 13

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José Joaquim da Silva	Anna Francisca de São José	1803	Pillar (S)	comerciante	Francisca de Medeiros		almotace	APB, Ordens régias, CIX, Soc. 5, fol. 245-247; DHAMB, Atas, XXIII, 260v.
	Maria Francisca de Santa Gertrudes	1803						
	2							
José Pereira Sodré	Anna Josefa dos Anjos	1742	Maragogipe		Teresa Maria de Brito, daughter of sr. de engenho			Costa, p. 297; Jaboatão, III, 232; IV, 114-11
	Francisca Joaquina da Asumpção	1742	(R)					
	Teresa Francisca de São José	1751						
	3							
José de Miralles	Margarida Josefa da Conceição	1744	Boipeda	Military	Josefa Ramos de Guerra		Ajutante tenente; author of História militar	Livro das ents., 162; Russell-Wood, "Catalogue of the Archive of the Destêrro Convent," p. 14; Cxa. 2, Pasta 59(I).
	Inácia Cherubina de Jesus	1752	Rosário (Cairé) (R)					
	2							

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José Pires de Carvalho (I)	Ursula Cordula das Virgins	1732 ?	S. Pedro (S)	sr. de engenho	Teresa Cavalcante de Albuquerque	vereador, 1702,1709, 1722,1726, 1730.	familiar do Santo Ofício; fidalgo da casa real; Ordem de Cristo	Jaboatão, II, 125; Costa, p. 294; Ruy, História da câmara, pp. 358,359,360 Russell-Wood, Fidalgos, p. 37 APB, Ordens reg XII, doc. 12.
	Anna do Sacramento	1726	Conceição da Praia - (S)					
	Françisca Maria Xavier	1731						
	Josefa Teresa de Jesus	1718	-					
	Antonia Josefa do Paraiso	1728	-					
	5							
José Pires de Carvalho (II)	Teresa Marianna do Livramento	1769	Santa Sé (S)	sr. de engenho	Isabel Joaquina de Aragão	vereador, 1750,1755, 1762,1767.	Sec. do Estado; alcaide-mor, Maragogipe; provedor da alfandega; provedor da comarca; provedor da Misericórdia; fidalgo da casa real	Costa, p. 294; Jaboatão, II, 125-126; Ruy, Hist. da câmara, pp. 361, 362, 363; ABNRJ,XXX, 214.
	Teresa Josefa do Paraiso	1769						
	Marianna Francisca Coração de Jesus	1796						
	Antonio de Jesus Maria	1796						
	4							

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José Rodrigues Pinheiro	Joanna Teresa do Coração de Jesus	1781	Santa Sé (S)	armação de pescado	Isidora Teresa da Franca Pinheiro	vereador, 1744	coronel; Ordem de Cristo	APCHB, 10709-10710; AHU, Bahia, Pap. avuls., 10711-10712; Ruy, Hist da câmara, p. 361.
	1							
Justiniano Cordeiro de Araujo Feijo	Rita Joaquina de Santa Clara	1799	Conceição da Praia	comerciante (registrado)	Anna Joaquina Ferreira França			C. Lugar, Personal communication.
	Anna Perpetua de Jesus	1805	Rua do Passo (S)					
	2							
Lopo de Albuquerque da Camara	Maria da Trindade	1703	S. Pedro (S)		Francisca Clara de Sande			Jaboatão, II, 110-111; Costa, p. 299; Cxa. 1, Pasta 14.
	1							
Luis Carlos da Silva Pina	Anna Bernardina de Jesus	1807	São Gonçalo (R)	sr. de engenho	Luisa Clara de Queiros Argolo		sargento-mor	Jaboatão, III, 130.
	Leonor Querubina de Santa Ifigenia	1807	Santa Sé (S)					
	2							
Luis Coelho Ferreira	Maria Gertrudes de São José	1763	Conceição da Praia (S)	comerciante	Maria Dias do Valle	procurador, 1748,1767.	desembargador	Caldas, pp. 525, 526,528; Santos Vilhena, II,310; Ruy, Hist. câmara, pp. 361-363.
	1							

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Luis Paes Florião	Joana do Espirito Santo Custôdia da França 2	1679 1680	Santa Sé (S)	sr. de engenho	Clara da França		sargento-mor	Wandeley Pinho, História, pp. 57-58.
Luis de Sousa Lisboa	Marianna de Santo 1	1701	Santa Sé (S)	homem de negócio	Francisca Gama	almotace		DHAMB, Atas, V 385-386.
Manuel de Almeida Marinho	Marianna de Natividade Lucia da Anunciação 2	1701 1701	Conceição da Praia (S)		Lourença Roseira			Livro das ents 63,64; Cxa. 1, Pasta 6.
Manuel Alvares Pereira	Maria de São Raimundo Rosa de Santa Clara 2	1694 ? 1700	Santa Sé (S)	cattle rancher; mercador	Anna da Silva		procurador of Destêrro	DHAMB, Atas, IV 406; V, 239; Cxa. 3; Livro das ents., 48,7
Manuel Antunes Lima	Francisca do Espirito Santo Magdalena de Jesus 2	1737 1737	São Pedro (S)	mestre pedreiro	Luisa do Espirito Santo		treasurer of Misericôrdia, co-founder of Lapa convent; Ordem de Cristo	Russell-Wood, p. 156; Livro das ents., 117-118. APB, LXII, 230-232; LXIV, 349v-352.

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Manuel de Brito	Maria Luisa de São Bernardo	1735	Santa Sé (S)		Josefa Maria Peçanha		coronel, Ordem de Cristo	Costa, p. 313; Jaboatão, IV, 209.
	Leonor Maria do Sacramento	1750	N.S. Nazaré do Joapiruru (R)					
	2							
Manuel da Costa da Câmara	Maria de Jesus	1683	Santa Sé		Maria Bulhões, daughter of lavrador de cana, Luis Gomes Bulhões		capitão	Jaboatão, Novo orbe, III, 658; Costa, p. 315.
	Luisa de Santo Antonio	1683	"					
	Maria de São Bernardo	1683	"					
	Catarina de Cristo	1683	" (S)					
	4							
Manuel Gonçalves Pinheiro	Isabel Maria Teresa da Cruz	1753	São Pedro (S)		Anna Maria Villela de Jesus	procurador, 1731 vereador, 1735		Ruy, Hist. câmara, p. 360; Livro das ents., 166.
	1							
Manuel Gonçalves Vianna	Joanna Josefa de Jesus	1727	Conceição da Praia		Joanna do Nascimento	procurador, 1722 vereador, 1728		Ruy, Hist. câm., p. 359; Livro das ents., 102, 111.
	Josefa Clara de Jesus	1734	(S)					
	2							

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Manuel de Lima Camacho	Bernarda de Santa Teresa	1743	Santa Sé	Military capt. of infantry	Caetanna Maria da Assumpção		capitão	APB, Notas, LXI 212-213; Livro das ents., 145-146.
	Thomacia Rita	1735						
	Felicia dos Anjos	1753	(S)					
	Anna Maria Joaquina	1757						
	4							
Manuel de Matos Vivieros	Maria de Santa Rosa	1695	-	sr. de engenho	Francisca da Silva	vereador, 1693	desembargador, 1694	Jaboatão, III, 183; Costa, p. 323; APCHB, 3834-3835; Ruy, Hist. câm., p.356.
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	P?							
Manuel de Oliveira Porto	Isabel da Fé	1684	Santa Sé	homem de negócio; cattle rancher	Maria da Silva	procurador, 1675		DHAMB, Atas, V, 239; VI, 334; Jaboatão, Novo orbe, III, 662; APCHB, II, 3979
	Inácia Xavier	1684						
	Luisa . . .	1684						
	Joanna . . .	1684 ?						
	Rosa Maria . . .	1684 ?						
	Marianna dos Anjos...	1684-						
	1.....	----						
	(7?)							

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Manuel Rodrigues Vieira	Ursula das Virgins 1	-	-		Maria da Cruz		licensiado	Cxa. 1, Pasta 16(II).
Manuel Sampaio de Freitas	Josefa Maria da Encarnação Josefa Maria de Santa Clara 2	1741 1741	Santa Sé (S)		Anna de São Miguel e Melo			Costa, pp. 331-332.
Manuel da Silva	Inácia Francisca Maria Bernardina de Jesus 2	1810 1810	Santa Anna do Sacramento	comerciante (registrado)	Teresa de Jesus	vereador, 1824		Ruy, Hist. câm. p. 367; C. Luga APB, CIX, fols. 245-247v.
Manuel de Soares Ferreira	Teresa da Fé 1	1688	----		Anna Pinto	almotace, capitão 1687 procurador, 1692		DHAMB, Atas, VI, 87; 177; Ruy, Hist. câm., p. 356,357.
Miguel de Passos Dias	Anna Francisca 11 1	1750	Santa Sé			procurador, 1724	provedor, Misericórdia	Russell-Wood, p. 374; Livro das ents., 157.
Nicolau Mendes de Oliveira	Marianna Florença 2	1696 1696	-	advogado	Vitória de Barros	vereador, 1688 síndico		Costa, p. 349; Cxa. 1, Pasta 36 Ruy, p. 356; Livro do tombo do mosteiro de São Bento, pp. 253,255,258, 260,261.

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Paulo Alvares Caminha	Anna Maria de Jesus 1	1731	Santa Sé (S)				capitão	Livro das ents. 107.
Paulo de Argôlo	Ines Perpetua da Encarnação Leonor Antonia do Salvador 2	1795 1795	N.S. do Socorro (R)	sr. de engenho	Leonor Antonia de Queiros	vereador, 1768	....	Costa, p. 352; Jaboatão, III, 127-128; ACC, "Inventário," 313-367; Ruy, Hist. câm., p. 363.
Pedro de Gois de Araujo	Antonia de Jesus 1	1684	--	sr. de engenho	Luisa de Melo	vereador, 1663		Cxa. 1, Pasta 2(II); Jaboatão IV, 189-190; Costa, p. 328; Ruy, Hist. câm., p. 352.
Pedro Gomes	Isabel de Santo Antonio Lucia ... 2	1684 ...	-- --	sr. de engenho	Isabel da Costa Madeira		mestre de campo; governador do Rio, 1680; provedor, Misericórdia, 1660,1667,1686; fidalgo da Casa Real; Ordem de Cristo	Jaboatão, IV, 121; Costa, p. 359; DHAMB, Atas IV, 406; Russell Wood, p. 373; Coaracy, 132.
Pedro Marinho de Sá	Francisca Teresa do Sacramento 1	1762	São Pedro (S)		Antonia Teresa de Sá		capitão	Costa, p. 360; Jaboatão, IV, 144; Livro das ents., 187.

FATHER'S NAME	NUMBER OF DAUGHTERS IN DESTÊRRO	YEARS OF PROFESSION	DAUGHTERS' PLACE OF BAPTISM	FATHER'S VOCATION	MOTHER'S NAME	MUNICIPAL COUNCIL POSTS	FATHER/ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SOURCES
Rafael Soares de França	Joanna de São Lourenço Custódia do Sacramento 2	--	--	sr. de engenho	Catarina de Sousa, granddaughter of sr. de engenho	juiz ordinario, 1675,1680	Ordem de Cristo	Jaboatão, III 179-180; Cost p. 363; Ruy, Hist. câm., p 354; DHAMB, Atas, V, 290.
Rodrigo de Argôlo de Lobo Barros	Maria de Santa Clara 1	1680's	--	sr. de engenho ?	Isabel Pereira de Magalhães		grand-son of "mercador rico;" son of Spaniard who arrived in Bahia, 1550's	Jaboatão, III 128; Costa, p 364.
Salvador Correa Vasqueanes	Leonor de Jesus Marta de Cristo 2	1687 1688	Rio de Janeiro --	military sr. de engenho ?	Margarida da França Corte Real, daughter of prominent and wealthy Manuel Gonçalves Barros		son of Duarte Correa Vasqueanes, governor of Rio	Coaracy, p. 13 Jaboatão, IV, 130-132.
Salvador Pires de Carvalho e Albuquerque	Teresa Barbosa 1	1758	Santa Sé (S)	sr. de engenho "morgado"	Joana Cavalcante de Albuquerque		alcaide-mor; coronel; provedor, Misericórdia; mestre de campo	Costa, p. 369; Jaboatão, II 125-126; Russell-Wood, p. 375; Caldas, p. 430

FATHER'S NAME	NUMBER OF DAUGHTERS IN DESTÊRRO	YEARS OF PROFESSION	DAUGHTERS' PLACE OF BAPTISM	FATHER'S VOCATION	MOTHER'S NAME	MUNICIPAL COUNCIL POSTS	FATHER/ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SOURCES
Sebastião Alvares da Fonseca	Luisa Francisca do Sacramento Teresa Joaquina 2	1746 1768			Maria de Sousa		sargento-mor juiz de fora, 1763	Santos Vilhena, II, 321; Livro das ents., 153
Sebastião de Araujo de Lima	Maria do Sacramento 1	1691	Salvador (S)	Military ? -Bureaucracy	Anna Maria da Silva	juiz ordinário, 1672,1692	Tenente general da Artilheria; coronel; alçaide-mor; morador, Salvador	Costa, p. 370; Ruy, Hist. câm. 353,356; Livro do Sumbo, 169; Varnhagen, IV, 75.
Simão [?] da Silva de Andrade	Florença da Resurreição 1	1695	Santa Sé (S)		Catarina Vieira de Goes		capitão	Livro das ents. 49; Cxa. 1, Pasta 6; Jaboatão, Novo orbe, III, 775-776.
Bod... de Andrade	Anna Jesus Maria 1	1688	Salvador (S)		Maria de Queiros			Livro das ents., 41.

APPENDIX III: THE URBAN PROPERTY OF THE CONVENT OF SANTA CLARA DO DESTÊRRO: A PARTIAL LISTING

HOUSE	LOCATION	TENANT	INITIAL DATE OF OCCUPANCY	ANNUAL RENTAL (reis)	ESTIMATED VALUE OF BUILDING/in reis*
1 - Casa de sobrado (two story)	Rua do Tijolo	Padre Joaquim Teixeira	Sept., 1790	48,000	1,468,800
a) 1ª loja (store or ground floor)	"	Manuel Isidoro	1791	13,440	
	"	Raimundo da Conceição	Feb., 1792	13,440	
b) 2ª loja	"	Anna Joaquina, mulher preta	Dec., 11789	12,000	
2- Casa terrea asobradada	Rua dos Capitães	Antonio José Lisboa	Dec., 1788	24,960	729,600
a) 1ª loja	"	Luisa de Jesus	1791	7,680	
"	"	Antonio Pereira de Carvalho de Azevedo	Jan., 1792	7,680	
b) 2ª loja	"	Antonio de Santa Rosa	May, 1789	3,840	

Source: ASCD, Livro dos alugueis, 1781-1811.

*Rentals are assumed to signify 5 percent of the building's value.

HOUSE	LOCATION	TENANT	INITIAL DATE OF OCCUPANCY	ANNUAL RENTAL (reis)	ESTIMATED VALUE OF BUILDING in reis*
3- Casa de sobrado	Rua dos Capitães	Rosa Xavier	May, 1789	45,360	984,000
a) loja	"	Rosa Maria, mulher preta	Mar., 1775	3,840	
4- Casa de sobrado	Ladeira do Carmo	Isabel Maria da França	Mar., 1791	40,000	1,283,200
a) loja	"	Bento de Sousa Guimarães	1791	24,160	
		Vicencia Maria da Conceição	Jan., 1792	24,160	
		João Chuzostimo [?]	May, 1792		
5- Casa terrea asobradada	R. dos Capitães	Dona Josefa Luisa	June, 1791	20,000	400,000
		Anna Maria do Sacramento	Aug., 1791		
		Francisco Gil	May, 1789	12,000	480,000
6- Casa terrea asobradada	R. dos Capitães	João de Açoguia	Mar., 1789	12,000	240,000
7- Casa terrea asobradada	R. dos Capitães	Bartolomeu Lopes de Castilho	1791	15,840	416,800

HOUSE	LOCATION	TENANT	INITIAL DATE OF OCCUPANCY	ANNUAL RENTAL (reis)	ESTIMATED VALUE OF BUILDING/in reis*
8- Casa	R. direita do Palácio	Joaquim José Cardoso			960,000
a)1º sobrado de cima & loja	"	"	Feb., 1790	24,000	
	"	"	July, 1788	12,000	
b)2º sobrado	"	João José Antonia	June, 1791	24,000	
	"	Francisca da Conceição	Sept.,1791	24,000	
9- Casa	R. direita do Palácio				1,380,000
a)1º sobrado de cima	"	Joaquim José Cardoso	Nov., 1777	24,000	
b)2º sobrado & loja	"	Francisco Machado	Jan., 1794	45,000	
10-Casa de sobrado & loja	R. da Barroquinha	João Francisco da Senhora da Purificação	June, 1791	33,600	672,000
11-Casa terrea (single story)	defronte de Santa Anna do Sacramento	- - - - - -	Jan., 1775	22,000	440,000
12-Casa terrea	R. do Passo	Domingos da Costa Filgueira	1774	24,000	480,000

HOUSE	LOCATION	TENANT	INITIAL DATE OF OCCUPANCY	ANNUAL RENTAL (reis)	ESTIMATED VALUE OF BUILDING/in reis*
13-Casa de sobrado	Areal de Cima	João Pereira Borges	June, 1791	19,200	1,228,000
		Antonio José Pereira Borges	May, 1793		
a) loja		Antonio da Conceição	June, 1791 - Aug., 1792	7,640	
		Francisco Regis	Aug., 1792- Jan., 1794	7,640	
b) loja		Inácia Maria do Sacramento	Nov., 1794	11,520	
c) loja		Anna Maria da Conceição	Nov., 1794	23,040	
14-Casa de sobrado	R. dos Ossos	Miguel Arcanjo de Almeida	June, 1791 - Aug., 1791	39,600	1,880,000
		Bernardina da Cunha	Sept., 1791	40,000	
loja		Luis José de Sousa	Dec., 1788	13,440- 15,360	
15-Casa terrea	pegado ao Convento de Santa Clara	Clara Pires	Aug., 1793	15,360	307,200

HOUSE	LOCATION	TENANT	INITIAL DATE OF OCCUPANCY	ANNUAL RENTAL (reis)	ESTIMATED VALUE OF BUILDINGS (reis)
16-Casa de sobrado	R. direita do Palácio				1,427,200 (1770's)
a) sobrado de cima (top floor)		João Francisco de Oliveira	1777	32,000-45,000	1,687,200 (1790's)
b) sobrado de baixo (floor below)		D. Maria Joaquina	June, 1791	24,000	
		Anna Joaquina	July, 1791	24,000	
		Estevão Pais de Figueredo	Aug., 1792	24,000	
c) loja		Sebastiana Maria da Encarnação	June, 1791	15,360	
		João Batista Pedroso	July, 1792	15,360	
. . . . .					
20-Casa terrea	R. da Poeira	Anselmo Antonio	Jan., 1791	11,520	230,400
21-Casa terrea	R. da Poeira	José Lopes de Araujo Lassos	Aug., 1788-Feb., 1793	12,000	240,000
		Gonçalo dos Santos	Apr., 1794	12,000	
22-Casa terrea	R. da Poeira	Antonia Maria de Nazaré	Jan., 1775	12,000	240,000

HOUSE	LOCATION	TENANT	INITIAL DATE OF OCCUPANCY	ANNUAL RENTAL (reis)	ESTIMATED VALUE OF BUILDING/in reis*
23-Casa de sobrado	Ladeira que vai de São Bento para Barroquinha	Ten. Rodrigo de Lemos	Feb., 1782-June, 1796	19,200	384,000
24-Casa terrea	R. da Barroquinha	Antonio Monis Leite Xavier	July, 1781-Oct., 1782	13,440	268,800
25-Casa terrea	R. da Barroquinha	Francisco Peréira	Dec., 1788-Apr., 1794	15,360	307,200
		Francisco de Salles Freire		15,360	
26-Casa de sobrado e loja	Ladeira de São Bento	José Pedro de Aguiar	Oct., 1777	60,000	1,200,000
27-Casa terrea	R. da Lapa	Maria Magdalena	June, 1791-1792	15,360	307,200 (1791-1793)
		Manuel Carlos, soldado do 1º regimento	Mar., 1792-Mar., 1793	15,360	
		Paula Luisa Maria	Mar., 1793	17,280	345,600 (1793-)
28-Casa terrea	R. da Lapa	Ursula das Virgins Menezes	Aug. 6, 1789	15,360	307,200

HOUSE	LOCATION	TENANT	INITIAL DATE OF OCCUPANCY	ANNUAL RENTAL (reis)	ESTIMATED VALUE OF BUILDING/in reis*
28-61 Casas terreas	R. da Lapa	- - - - -		15,360 or 19,200	307,200 or 384,000
. . . . .					
81-Casa de Sobrado	S. Miguel	Padre Manuel Pereira do Lago	June 30, 1791	17,280	345,600
		Licensiado Felix de França,	Aug. 2, 1791	17,280	
		Padre João de Almeida Lessa	Jan., 1795		
. . . . .					
83-Casa terrea	R. das Veronicas	Quiteria, preta forra	June 30, 1791	12,000	240,000
. . . . .					
85-Casa terrea	R. da Fonte	Padre Antonio Luis da Conceição,	Sept. 7, 1788	19,200	

APPENDIX IV: SAMPLE INVENTORIES OF NUNS

Inventory, Pasta 60(I), Cxa. 2

Nun: Brites de Esperança

Date of Death: October 4, 1731

Property remaining at death of nun	Value in reis
figure	1,920
wardrobe	30,000
stool	960
breviary in volumes	6,000
1 ripanco [?]	960
1 silver spoon	640
1 lamina [?]	960
some tequillinhas from India	1,060
1 crude bowl	320
1 pillow	4,000
1 slave, Anna de São Joaquim, sold to Sister Marianna of the Nativity	70,000
1 slave, Vitória	70,000
2 notebooks without value	
1 old cot, without value	
18 spiritual books, given to the community	
1 "piece of clothing and a basin pledged to a religious on the condition that she recommend the soul of the departed to Our Lord."	

Inventory, Pasta 60(II), Cxa. 2

Nun: Francisca Maria do Livramento

Date of Death: December 10, 1758

Property remaining at death of nun	Value in reis
1 figure of Jesus Christ	28,000
various gold coins	149,000
various silver coins	39,760
various copper coins	15,900
1 basin of wire (?)	960
2 old wire basins (?)	960
3 glass bowls	240
2 anchoes ..... and a few quartinhas ..... (measures?)	960
1 jewel case (or small box)	160
1 red tray	240
1 oclo (?)	3,840
collected debts	17,840
money in the drawer	4,120
Disposed of as follows	
masses	21,120
alms to the saints	28,000
alms	1,280
4 bulls (ecclesiastical)	200

	Value in reis
Debts	
to Manuel da Silva Moniz to Luis Gomes Coelho	19,320
Received from attorney	190,360
adjustment of sum	1,780
Total value of property	262,060

Inventory, Pasta 47(III), Cxa. 2

Nun: Maria Clara da Conceição

Date of death: November 20, 1780

Property remaining at death of nun	Value in reis
Figure of Christ crucified, traded with another, to remain in the Chapel of Sr. dos Passos.	
Figure of Christ child	
Ribbons of .... and garters? (ligas) and abutuadura.(?)	6,800
Old wardrobe, sold	16,800
cot	6,000
2 chairs	
1 large and 1 small stool used in the chapel of Our Lord of the Steps.	
6 plates, large and small platters, saucers, measures, bowl, isulé (?), anrodes (?), orinol (?) (partially given to the community)	11,300
2 habits, 1 with accessories, sold to a religious	12,000
2½ pieces of British cloth, and some of linen; some inferior cloth from a white veil given to a slave	
1 wire basin, sold	1,200
1 fragrance with its flasks, sold	2,000
1 blanket of fine cloth, sold	1,600

Property remaining at death of nun	Value in reis
1 cal... , sold	
4 basins for the oven that remain for the community	
2 taxes ? , that remain	960
3 green flasks and 3 bottles	960
1 slave, João, sold	40,000 (?)
1 cabra, sold	30,000
1 negress, freed	40,000

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